

Lea Frauenknecht

Who am I? And why are you so different? – by Lea Frauenknecht

In fact, I am a nobody. A piece of dirt. Compared to the world's population of six billion I'm a nobody. Compared to people like Barack Obama and Mahatma Gandhi I don't matter. But in my own small world, I try to matter. I try to be someone you recognize. Somebody happy. Somehow me.

I was different from the very beginning. I was born nine weeks earlier than they expected, but I survived and now I am a healthy person. I am an only child. Both my parents started to work again when I was three years old, so I was on my own more often than the other children, which was not bad at all. So I had to entertain myself. I grew up differently. When I was happy, I always sang songs nobody knew because I made them up in my mind. I have experiences nobody can share with me. Nobody grew up like I did. I grew up differently.

I still am. Different, I mean. I have all those pictures in my head, almost my whole life. Everything I see is like a picture stream in my head. I can see pictures of my first day at school and I can exactly remember the way the sun rays went through the windows of the classroom and illuminated my classmates' heads. I see a long road in the desert, it's already sundown – my first visit in New Mexico, USA, when I was six years old. I think I can keep those pictures better than other people. Other people forget those little details. I don't. I like to watch the people in the underground and try to imagine their life. Others wouldn't even realise them. I can look at a dirty wall or an uneven stone and suddenly I see faces or animals in those patterns of nature, although they are not really there. Other people would call me insane if I'd tell them what I see. And what I see becomes stuck as a picture in my head.

I am so different because the pictures in my head get so many and sometimes I have the feeling that they'll make my head go off. So I have to get them out of my head. Therefore, I put them on a piece of paper. I write them down. I write what I saw once. Or I draw. Sometimes I even put those pictures in the music I make and share them with people. And then they don't call me insane anymore.

But there's also another reason besides the pictures for why I am so different and why I am who I am: I'm not reasonable. I mean I'm kind of reasonable in the way that I do my homework and go to bed at 10

pm, but I'm totally not emotionally reasonable. Let me give you an example: I once loved a person. It doesn't matter who he is. But if I were emotionally reasonable I would have told myself from the very beginning: Forget about him. It's neither reasonable nor possible that the two of you will ever come together. Then, for a normal person, it would be okay. But from the very beginning I was not able to oppress my feelings in the way I just had to let the love out of me and see it as a possibility to do something weird in my life. Now since I know that he doesn't love me I can let it go, and in this point I'm reasonable again, but at first, I'm as unreasonable as possible for as long as I can. And so are my plans and my lifestyle: Not reasonable from the very beginning. Tomorrow I could be hit by a car and die. And who tells me I *have* to go to university and that I *have* to marry someday? It's *my* life. And so I want it to be unreasonable, unpredictable and not at all comparable with any other life on this earth.

My greatest aim is happiness, or at least the shape of happiness. I try to reach it every day. Going swimming in a lake with my clothes on is definitely unreasonable, but it just pushes the happiness out of me. You can hear nobody but me sing Reggae songs aloud on a beach in North western Denmark, but these are exactly the best moments of my life. When nothing matters but happiness.

I really don't have any fixed plans for my future, but I like the thought of me traveling around and doing what I have always wanted to do. I love Denmark because it's quiet and rough. I love San Francisco because you can discover something behind each corner of this city. And I love New Mexico because I feel at home in the desert there. And I love France because I love the French language and culture. A strange combination of places, isn't it? It's like a mirror to my strange soul. I like roughness and loneliness, the heat and drought, but neither do I deny culture.

I have dreadlocks. This is why people in the streets often look at me like as though they had just seen an alien. I'd like to take away all these prejudices. I'm a kind person, well, I'm sarcastic and I have a very special humour. As far as politics are concerned I'm on the very left side (but *not* on the radical side), but I'm kind. I'm kind because I never had to argue with my brothers or sisters in my childhood and I often find myself in the hammock of harmony, rocking myself into a world behind the little arguments. But don't blame me just for that.

So, in fact, I am a nobody, still, after all. I'm a piece of dirt although I wrote those lines in order to make myself matter. That's what you might think now after having read all these selfish words which don't matter either. And you're totally right: Compared to the world's population of six

billion I am a nobody and compared to you and your friends I don't matter.

But now, after all that, I slowly start to matter in your brain because you begin to remember what you just read about me and you think about me. Maybe you start to search and find pictures in your head, banned into an empty corner. You start to share them and then a sudden feeling of irrationality overwhelms you and you decide to visit your grandma and share ten cups of self-made frozen yogurt with her. You forget your future and live in the present. And maybe you even get to tell somebody that you love him or her, somebody of whom you thought up to this point: "It's either unreasonable or unrealistic."

And see: This is the point where I am different and I start to matter for you: This is the point where I could give you an impression of my way of living and the point where you (maybe in a long time) again feel the happiness pushing out of you.

Thank you for reading this and making me matter.