

***The Waking Dream: Fantasy and the Surreal in Graphic Art  
1450-1900.* Introduction and Commentaries by Edward  
Lucie-Smith; notes on the plates by Aline Jacquot. London,  
Thames and Hudson, 1975. \$33.25**

Jules Heller

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Volume 3, Number 1, 1976

URI: <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1077385ar>  
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7202/1077385ar>

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Publisher(s)

UAAC-AAUC (University Art Association of Canada | Association d'art des universités du Canada)

ISSN

0315-9906 (print)  
1918-4778 (digital)

[Explore this journal](#)

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Cite this review

Heller, J. (1976). Review of [*The Waking Dream: Fantasy and the Surreal in Graphic Art 1450-1900.* Introduction and Commentaries by Edward Lucie-Smith; notes on the plates by Aline Jacquot. London, Thames and Hudson, 1975. \$33.25]. *RACAR : Revue d'art canadienne / Canadian Art Review*, 3(1), 73–74. <https://doi.org/10.7202/1077385ar>

indiqués par la trajectoire des regards, dessinent ici (si l'on prend en considération les trois personnages principaux: Sainte Anne, Marie et le Grand Prêtre) un triangle scalène dont deux des côtés sont soumis à trois types de transformations: expansion + parallélisation + perpendicolarisation. C'est également grâce aux trajectoires des regards que Paris, dans son second essai, parvient à retracer les différentes phases de la destruction du mythe de la *Virgo orans* (sans recours, on s'en souvient, à l'ordre chronologique). Cette méthode a, me semble-t-il, un premier avantage: celui de commencer par l'investigation de l'espace à la fois défini et modifié par l'objet, donc d'exclure tout apriorisme; et un second: celui de permettre la confrontation d'oeuvres de cultures et de périodes différentes. À vrai dire, cette approche objective de l'objet (déjà utilisée par l'auteur dans *L'Espace et le regard*, Paris, 1965) n'est pas nouvelle. Rappelons seulement la *Strukturforschung* de Guido von Kaschnitz (centrée il est vrai sur l'étude de l'archéologie méditerranéenne) développée avant la seconde guerre mondiale en Allemagne et en Autriche, et les applications plus récentes des structuralistes conduits par Claude Levi-Strauss. Ce qui change ici, c'est essentiellement le procédé heuristique, la notion de *structuration* prenant le pas sur celle de *structure*.

Ceci dit, certains points demeurent en suspens: comment appliquer le principe du regard au paysage, ou à la nature morte, par exemple? Bien sûr, le regard omniprésent de l'artiste demeure; mais comment évaluer son activité? Jean Paris suggère également (p. 25) que cette approche soit étendue à d'autres niveaux: chromatique, expressif, thématique, etc. Par quelles voies pense-t-il y parvenir? Et enfin: cette approche peut-elle nous aider à mieux comprendre les œuvres contemporaines nonobjectives, rebelles aux méthodes analytiques traditionnelles? Quoiqu'il en soit, la critique générative proposée par Jean Paris mérite notre attention. Paradoxalement, les préoccupations linguistiques qu'elle met en évidence, loin d'être modernes (si ce qualificatif a encore un sens), nous ramènent à l'aube de la Renaissance. Dans le second livre du *De pictura*, on se souvient qu'Alberti qui prend Giotto déjà comme exemple, définit la composition picturale comme l'art d'intégrer « les parties au tout » dans un système à quatre niveaux: l'*historia*, c'est-à-dire le tout, comprend les corps, qui sont « les parties de l'*historia* », les membres, qui sont « les parties des corps », et les surfaces planes, qui sont « les parties des membres ». Michael Baxandall a montré que ce modèle compositionnel a été tiré du *De figuris sententiarum* d'Isi-

dore: « La période est faite de propositions, la proposition est faite de clauses, la clause est faite de mots ». Avec Alberti, la *compositio verborum* devient, selon sa propre expression, la *compositio corporum*. *Painting and Linguistics* de Jean Paris pose en termes nouveaux un ancien problème, celui de la « poiétique », c'est-à-dire l'ensemble des règles d'action imposées à l'artiste par l'autorité souveraine de l'imaginaire.

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*The Waking Dream: Fantasy and the Surreal in Graphic Art 1450-1900. Introduction and Commentaries by Edward Lucie-Smith; notes on the plates by Aline Jacquot. London, Thames and Hudson, 1975. \$33.25.*

When I find a typographical error on the very first page of text (line 30) of Edward Lucie-Smith's lucid introduction to the fantastic and surreal in 450 years of printmaking, I become somewhat suspicious of the care and feeding given this volume.

Who bears the ultimate responsibility for the publication of an art book such as this? To whom is this book addressed? Why are prints, in the Year of Our Lord 1976, still being treated merely as images on paper? Why is it assumed that the reader knows nothing, will never know anything, and does not want to know anything about printmaking and about the similarities and differences that obtain between drawings and prints? Is there no true concern felt by anyone? Are we not looking, essentially, at a picture book of woodcuts, etchings, dry-points, aquatints, metal engravings, wood engravings? What, other than a desire for rubles, rials, pesos, dollars, and pounds, prompts one of the most respectable publishing houses in Europe to translate this two-year old work from the French, to employ the worthy services of Mr. Edward Lucie-Smith to write an introduction and some commentaries, and to republish an ill printed, poorly-bound, cheap, ugly, monstrous-to-the-touch, non-book, a *potpourri* of bad reproductions of some good and many poor prints on various themes by sundry persons, including several great print makers?

It appears as though the initial work was the effort of an individual trying to remember *Who Was Who in Printmaking*, from the Master E.S. to

Redon, and encountering certain difficulties along the way. The present volume is a masterpiece of nonsense insofar as it relates to the *visual* presentation of works by Durer, Schongauer, Rembrandt, Goya, and others; it places the works of superb printmakers in proximity with the output of many non-entities and squeezes all of these images (there's that nasty word again) into arbitrary and pre-selected themes. Thus, certain original prints, certain high-water marks in the history of printmaking, are intermingled with reproductive prints (artisan copies of oil paintings, for example) and are stitched haphazardly together in a stewpot of the good, the bad, and the indifferent in order to fit a tired, literary format. We are treated to an examination of themes which, through many centuries in various European cultures, have haunted, amused, aroused, plagued, disturbed, or provoked the printmaker: death and the fear of death (as seen in reproductions of literally-treated apocalyptic visions or in detailed examinations of the human anatomy); witchcraft in its many guises; transformation (the deliberate deformation of reality to suit the purpose of the artist); allegories on myriad subjects; and perspective prints of various sorts.

Mr. Lucie-Smith seems to find Tiepolo's *Scherzi* more in the true spirit of the occult than the traditional allusions to witchcraft offered by Goya "which seem to be inspired mainly by his mistrust of the sexual charm of women." (p.9) I suggest that the author is, curiously enough, confusing art with life. It has been long suggested that Goya revelled in his amorous exploits in word and deed, and boasted of his fear and mistrust of no one. Is Mr. Lucie-Smith seeking Freudian interpretations of Goya's adventurous encounters in the bullring and with abduction, and of Goya's dare-devil ascent over Michelangelo's dome to the cross of St. Peter's, without documenting his case?

He finds hints of sadism in anatomical prints that range in time from Vesalius to Charles Bell and he suggest that "deforming and transforming images can be more conveniently examined through prints than it can elsewhere," (p.10) but offers no rationale for this judgement. Attempting to sustain the comparison of four groups of arabesque figures by the 17th century goldsmith, Christoph Jamnitzer, with the work of Saul Steinberg *through the medium of words*, Mr. Lucie-Smith avoids precise visual comparison. He states that Steinberg delights in inventing ambiguities, that "he [Steinberg] will show us a hand that holds a pen that draws a line that creates the hand which is holding the pen." (p. 12) I find the comparison

between Jamnitzer and Steinberg tenuous in the extreme.

One example, selected at random from the plate annotations by Aline Jacquot, which describes processes employed by Rembrandt in his graphic *oeuvre*, will suffice to demolish the credibility of this person's understanding of printmaking processes: "He then took an interest in the technique of engraving and discovered the possibilities of varying the quantities of acid and ink so as to obtain gradations of tone."(p. 98) (Underlining mine) One could be kind, I suppose, and suggest that the translation errs. One could also say that even if the false word were translated to "etching," it is still quite clear that the role of the acid on the plate and of the ink in the intaglio is unknown to Jacquot and to the translator.

If one has *never* seen the original prints reproduced in this book and doubts that he or she will ever see them, this volume may assist one in knowing certain things *about* some of the prints — but precious little of the works themselves.

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Jean CUISENIER, *L'Art populaire en France*, Fribourg, Office du Livre, 1975. 334 pages; 406 ill. 28 cm. \$75.

"Qu'on n'attende pas de ce livre un relevé encyclopédique ni quoi que ce soit qui ressemble à un catalogue de l'art populaire en France ", nous affirme l'auteur. Cet ouvrage se présente plutôt comme "une véritable méthodologie" ou un traité de l'art populaire. Voilà de quoi attirer l'attention de tous ceux qui attendaient un tel ouvrage sur une matière dont on n'avait jusqu'ici traité des aspects méthodologiques qu'à travers des articlets et des introductions de catalogues d'expositions. Si l'on considère en plus ses quatre cent six (406) illustrations, dont cinquante-sept (57) en superbes couleurs, ses trente-sept (37) pages de bibliographie, son répertoire d'environ trois cent cinquante (350) catalogues d'expositions tenues à travers la France depuis quelques décennies et son répertoire analytique de près de deux cent quatre-vingt (280) musées français qui recèlent des collections d'art populaire, ce livre stimulera aussi l'intérêt des amateurs d'art et de livres d'art en même temps que celui des professeurs et des étudiants en quête d'instruments de travail. Mais l'objectif de l'auteur