Summaries of the Articles

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Number 36, Fall 1964

URI: https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/58461ac

See table of contents

Publisher(s)
La Société La Vie des Arts

ISSN
0042-5435 (print)
1923-3183 (digital)

Cite this article
lemont at the beginning. He died in one of the houses of the Brothers at Point St. Charles on October 11, 1700, in his 80th year, has come to light as the result of a restoration project on a work by artist Pierre Le Ber.

Le Ber was commissioned to do the painting at Mother Bourgeois death. During the last century, however, the portrait was repainted, with no respect whatever for the original work, as evidenced by photographs taken of the painting, judging by the artist's supplies itemized in his will.

An expert New York artist-restorer named Edward O. Korany examined the work and by means of X-rays established that there was another portrait under the surface picture (Photo 5). In fact, the X-rays showed another shoulder line, other hands and part of another face. A coat of white lead, however, could not be penetrated sufficiently by the rays to enable the restorer to be certain the face could be uncovered. Fairly certain of the situation, he asked and was granted permission by the sisters of the order to proceed with the work.

The work of restoration is shown in Photos 6 and 7. The original painting comes to light in Photo 8. An enlargement of the head appears in Photo 9. Photo 10 shows the full true portrait.

Pierre Le Ber, son of Jacques Le Ber, the wealthiest merchant of the time in New France, was born in Montreal on August 11, 1669. Very pious and extremely generous, he gave much to the religious institutions of Ville Marie. He contributed greatly to the founding of the General Hospital of the Charron Brothers and, while he did not take vows, he was part of this community from the start. He died in one of the houses of the Brothers at Point St. Charles on October 1, 1707.

Nothing is known of his artistic background but it is certain that there was a feeling for beautiful things in the family. His sister, Jeanne, for example, did some magnificent pieces of embroidery. There is no doubt that he devoted a good part of his time to art, particularly painting, judging by the artist's supplies itemized in his will.

Should we attribute the painting of the Infant Jesus at the Congregation of Notre Dame to this artist? I do not think so but it would be necessary to restore this work to its original state to be sure because it, too, has been retouched. But of one thing I am certain and that is that on January 12, 1700, Pierre Le Ber painted a masterpiece of Canadian portraiture. It is a magnificent work which does justice to the many human qualities attributed to Mother Bourgeois. Looking at this painting, it is not difficult to understand the love the people of Ville Marie had for the woman who contributed so much to the founding of the community.

For Mariette Rousseau-Vermette, the art of tapestry-making is a grand and beautiful adventure. There is a profoundness to her work which reminds us of the Zen philosophy, a meditative, contemplative quality that produces a kind of poetic liturgy. She works serenely and generously to produce works which are moving without being upsetting and monumental without being solemn.

Mariette Rousseau-Vermette, who was born at Trois Pistoles in 1926, is the wife of ceramist Claude Vermette, of Ste. Adele. She studied in France, the United States, France, Italy, Spain and in the Scandinavian countries. She has had a number of exhibitions, including that of Lausanne in 1962, an international showing of modern tapestries. Her works are included in both Canadian and foreign collections.
The artist admits that her tapestries could be described as reflections. Her reflection in the lakes and on the snow at nightfall show a great activity to nature. She has been influenced recently by the American artist Rothko, whose works frequently show a marked meditative quality. Her current work has a play of geometric forms with a lyrical quality and a poetic feel. Mariette Vermette felt she needed to explore new areas and her Spring show at the Camille Hebert Gallery showed that she may yet be reaching out for still new horizons despite the dynamic variety of her present efforts.

gaetan baudin — japan

Some 600 pieces of pottery, brought back to Canada by Gaetan Baudin, one of our most remarkable potters, after a study trip to Japan, were exhibited at the Pointe Claire Art Centre in June. The exhibition, which went by almost unnoticed, included examples of work from the regions of Honami, Bizen and Mashiko. Baudin stayed in Honami, about 30 miles from Okayama and not far from Bizen. The young Yu Fujiiwara worked with him at Kei Fujirara's. Ken, the nephew of Kei, was a neighbor. Kanashige, Yamamoto and the three Fujiiwara are the most original and most celebrated potters of his own. Rakusai is the most representative of the archaic tradition. Made in the village of Shigaraki, his works are superior. Another type of traditional pottery is the Shino Yaki.

the world of pop

by MELVIN CHARNEY

Technology has made the contemporary world a dense and small place where the mass media maintain a ready-made reality for the populations lost in the urban sprawl. The mechanized landscape presents us with a visual storage of manipulative images that are devised to be read with the least effort by the largest number of people.

It is this man-made contemporary world that Pop Art confronts. It uses its popular images, and is involved with the means of communication that made these images popular.

There is no fixed and single aesthetic that dominates Pop Art, but, rather, a growing idea and a common attitude. The Pop attitude can be seen to emphasize the detachment of the artist; feedback, perhaps, from the American era of Zen and hipsterism. There is a strenuous allegiance to plain descriptive and dead-pan realism, and to the choice of random but archetypal events and objects.

The images used by the Pop artists are the most common and massively projected images of our time. Images so looked at that they have become unseen.

Roy Lichtenstein, for instance, starting from the comic-strip, the advertising poster and popular reproductions, fragments these images and presents them in an impersonal and direct manner, without sentiment or emotion. The effect of this presentation is that of a shock treatment: they are seen real and intense, as if for the first time.

With James Rosenquist, we find a montage of images taken from the great themes of advertising. His colours are the jarring colours of billboard treatment: they are seen real and intense, as if for the first time.

For most people the only tangible contact with reality is conditioned by the second-hand world of the mass media, and the Pop artist deals in second-hand images. He uses the most mass produced images for an art which emphasizes above all the value of the unique object. A light bulb, a wall, a store front, a sign, and a bottle — the small and true milieu of man — is made special.

bernard requichot

by ANDRÉE PARADIS

For Bernard Requichot, any attention paid his creations was "an encroachment on his thoughts and his heart" (Cahiers Intimes, Requichot) and it is almost indecent to break into that great silence with which he always sought to surround himself. But this intrusion on his privacy is necessary now because of the importance and uniqueness of his work. It is now time for an appreciation because, by his death, the artist relegated his work to the living world.

Painter, poet, sculptor, metaphysician, Bernard Requichot (1929-1961) ended his life while still in his youthful years. His career was a short one but his contribution to the world of art was nonetheless a full one. We are only now beginning to realize the strong originality of his work.

Like Rimbaud, this artist saw what few human beings see. At 20 years of age, he became interested in the cubist influence but he left this quickly in favor of surrealism. He was stifled, too, by this school which, he said, led only to a world of dreams that were possible. In the abstract method, he thought he could create dreams that were possible only in the work itself.

Requichot's work is wide-ranging and of special interest are the works he produced through the glued-paper process. Among other items of interest, too, are two white plastic ring sculptures, the result of long, patient work.
An exhibition of sacred art was held during the summer at the Kelley Library of St. Dunstan’s University in Charlottetown as part of Prince Edward Island’s centennial program. The show was organized by Abbé Adrien Arsénault, an artist, folklorist, art critic and member of the Canada Council. There were 165 items in the exhibition, among them paintings, sculptures on wood, metal and stone, religious ornaments and even an altar. Some 50 Canadian artists from all the provinces were represented.

Two interesting exhibitions were held in May and June in Paris. Jean McEwen’s show at the Galerie Anderson-Mayer in May was considered a great success by the French press. The journals, Art and Combat, were particularly impressed. In June, a show entitled Quebec Painters in Paris, organized by artist James Pichette and our contributor, Jean Cathelin, was held at the Maison de la Culture Paris-Mercure. There were works by Riopelle, Germain Perron, Marcelle Maltais, Edmond Alley, Paul V. Beaulieu, Suzanne Bergeron and Real Arsénault.

La Peinture Moderne au Canada Français (Modern Painting in French Canada) is the third in a series of pamphlets dedicated to art, life and science in French Canada, published by the Department of Cultural Affairs in Quebec under the direction of Mrs. Genevieve de la Tour Fondue-Smith. This work by Guy Viau, consisting of 96 pages, considers the revival of the pictural arts in French Canada. The volume has been presented with good taste and is enhanced by a number of photographs and reproductions in black and white.

An exhibition of Quebec books will be held in the Cité Universitaire Laval from October 22 to 27. The chairman of the exhibition this year will be André Vachon, of Laval University. More than 6,000 volumes will be on display. The various committees responsible for the salon have met several times recently and plans are well under way.

It was not so much to get away from the trials and tribulations of an art merchant that Daniel Cordier decided recently to close down his gallery on the Rue de Miromesnil in Paris but rather to free himself for his one passion — painting. "To preserve this passion," he wrote recently to his friends, "I wish to get away from a form of activity that threatens to extinguish it." The letter drew barely a comment in Paris where it was received, read and promptly forgotten.

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