Summaries of the Articles

Number 47, Summer 1967

URI: https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/58321ac

See table of contents

Publisher(s)
La Société La Vie des Arts

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

Cite this document
**SUMMARIES OF THE ARTICLES**

**marshall mcluhan**

In 1962, a stimulating book entitled *The Gutenberg Galaxy: The Making of Typographic Man* was published in Toronto. Its author, Marshall McLuhan, pushed ahead with his research into communications and his recent works, *Understanding Media* and *The Medium is the Massage*, have received wide audiences.

Marshall McLuhan's thoughts cannot be easily compressed and assessed. Briefly, however, there is an attempt to cure that spiritual defect which consists in reducing everything in terms of two opposite poles, thus making it necessary to choose between black and white, good and bad, pretty and ugly, cowboys and Indians, and east and west.

McLuhan's investigations are in the area of information techniques which are straining our present cultural structures. Are we passing from the magical world of sound to the opaque world of the visual? Is culture about to become electronic? Man admires his machines and then becomes their slave,consoling himself with the thought that he is still the inventor. The industrial revolution follows the logic of the applied sciences and thus prepares the age of technocracy where an electric brain will replace Pascal's calculating machine.

Curiously, painting has managed to escape the limitations of the applied sciences and thus prepares the age of technocracy. Where an electric brain will replace Pascal's calculating machine.

**herve de rouville portrait gallery**

After the French tradition, the Hertel de Rouville family has built up a portrait gallery of illustrious family members to grace their provincial home at St. Hilaire. The original collection, consisting of ten canvases, of which nine survive, is similar to those which for centuries have been displayed in the famous old French chateaux, and recall the glories of one of New France's most illustrious families.

The de Rouville portraits are among the first such family groups to have been painted in Canada, and as such are of particular interest in the history of Canadian art. They present a panorama of Quebec portrait painting covering almost two centuries, the first portrait having been completed shortly after 1700, when painting was still a primitive art in this country. The later portraits date from 1840 and show marked advances in techniques.

Some of the portraits are signed, for few 17th and 18th century Quebec artists added their signatures to their work, for they regarded themselves as workmen hired to record a likeness, rather than creative artists in their own right.

Among the earliest portraits are those of two soldier brothers, grandsons of Jacques Hertel de la Freniere, who arrived in Canada from France about 1626.

The portraits of the two brothers are very obviously "record" paintings, for the work lacks the quality and sophistication of the European artist. Although there is one technical characteristic common to both paintings, i.e., the portraits were done on canvases with a prepared black ground, it would be pure speculation to name the painters.

A possible candidate, however, is Dessaline de Richerere, said to be an early graduate of Bishop Laval's School of Arts and Crafts, at St. Joachim.

Those portraits which were done between 1830 and 1840, including that of Jean-Baptiste Rene Melchior Hertel de Rouville, who fought in the Battle of Chateauguay as an officer under Colonel de Salaberry, are obviously the work of Roy-Audy, an exceedingly popular painter of rural family groups of the period.

Roy-Audy, who went by an address of the surreal movement and became associated with Andre Breton, Eliard, Dali, and Aragon, he was part of a group which included Prevert, Desnos, Michel Leiris and Andre Masson.

**alberto giacometti**

Alberto Giacometti was born October 10, 1901, in the tiny village of Squalia, in Switzerland, where he obtained his primary education.

From the outset of Giacometti's academic career, throughout his classical studies, his restless curiosity was most evident, and he was attracted by the unknown and the inexplicable. It was most probably his seeming interest in the mysterious and the occult which led him eventually to become an adherent of the surrealist movement.

In 1919, Giacometti enrolled at the School of Arts and Crafts in Geneva. Here he became a member of a sculptor's workshop, where he received his basic instruction in that art. Two years later he left for Paris, where he joined the workshop of Antoine Bourdelle at L'Academie de la Grande Chaumiere.

During this stage of his career, Giacometti became associated with such notables of the period as Laurens, Lipchitz, Arp and Zadkine. It was also during his apprenticeship to Bourdelle that he became pre-occupied with the necessity of capturing a figure in its entirety.

In 1928, fascinated by primitive art, he abandoned the model and schooled himself to fashion reality from memory.

Two years before he was an adherent of the surrealist movement and became associated with Andre Breton, Eliard, Dali, and Aragon, he was part of a group which included Prevert, Desnos, Michel Leiris and Andre Masson.

This association continued until 1935, the year that Giacometti succumbed to the irresistible urge to understand and give expression to the world about him.

As a sculptor, Giacometti was essentially a mouldeer; rarely did he work in stone or wood.

The year 1928 marked the beginning of his "open sculpture" period, so named because of the open spaces left here and there. These open sculptures became more and more unusual, leading the Swiss sculptor into the camp of the surrealists.

As Jean Paul Satre once remarked, the sculpture of Giacometti must be viewed from afar, thus inviting one to look rather than to touch, in direct opposition to the usual reaction invoked by sculpture.
The apartment has been furnished with limited means but in it are the thousand and one things that the two enjoy. Some of the collection are souvenirs while other pieces were received as gifts. But all have been absorbed into the apartment with affection. They complement the exquisite pieces of furniture of Louis XVI provincial, directoire and English. Certain of the English pieces in particular are convenient since they fit into the limited living spaces afforded by modem-day urban homes. They were designed to be compact and to serve a variety of purposes. The furniture inspires special attention because of the way in which it has been grouped. This is an apartment in which the objects of everyday life take on a very special feeling.

**La galerie hervé**

In 1956, Herve Odermatt opened an art gallery in Paris. In April of this year La Galerie Herve, located on Sherbrooke street west, across from Beaux Arts, fulfilled M. Odermatt's second ambition. An outstanding display of the Herve Gallery is a collection of 17 works of Renoir, valued at over $2,000,000, acquired by M. Odermatt in England, France, Canada and the United States. Of these, four canvases are from Canadian collections; all others are for sale.

Montreal rather than Paris was selected for the Renuirs as a tribute to M. Odermatt's father-in-law, M. Simard of Sorel, who desired to see Quebec province as an art centre of the world.

**National gallery**

Three memorable exhibitions were held in March and April by Ottawa's National Gallery. Photography of the 20th Century, Treasures of Poland, and Canada at the Biennial of Paris.

Most noteworthy, perhaps, was the latter exhibit, which included the sculpture of Henry Saxe, the films of Pierre Hebert and Al Sensus, and the photography of John Max. The work of these artists was outstanding in that each had extended the limits of expression of his medium.

**Dioche and flory**

Recent exhibitions at the Zanettin Gallety included one-man shows by Gilles Dioche and Claude Fleury. The ceramics of Dioche once more emphasized the simplicity of his art, his desire to reduce all form to its essence. The twenty or so water colors of Fleury mirror today's society, and they reflect the artist's love for his native Quebec.

**Tissien, willier, etc.**

For many years, young contemporary New Brunswick artists have been absent from the national scene. Recently, however, considerable attention has been accorded George Tissien, recent graduate of Mount Allison University, for his graphic art, Fred Williar of Saint John, who is primarily a sculptor, Thomas Forrestell, of Fredericton, who has held a one-man show at Klinkhoff's Montreal gallery in May, and Fred Ross, of Saint John, who has recently completed an eight-foot circular mural for the Centennial Provincial Government Building in Fredericton.

**Véladon and soulages**

The Paris Museum of Modern Art this spring offered an exhibition of the works of Soulages and Suzanne Valadon, on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the latter's birth. Only recently have Parisians rediscovered the mother of Utrillo as the greatest woman painter of France, and there is a new enthusiasm for her portraits. Visitors to the museum will view also 81 works of Soulages, considered a genius by some, by others mad, but always completely fascinating.

**Gobelin tapisseries**

Visitors to the Palace of Versailles will this summer be treated to a fascinating exhibition of Gobelin tapisseries. Sponsored by France's Minister of Cultural Affairs and under the direction of Jean Coural, this exhibit will be held from June until October in the Galerie de l'Orangerie, a setting chosen to do justice to the magnificent size and colors of the tapisseries.

**Brussels**

By J. M. VAN AVERMAET

Brussels, political and intellectual capital of Belgium, is considered by many to be the heart of Europe. Here, where French and Flemish cultures blend, artistic endeavors reach wondrous heights. Worth of particular attention is the Palais des Beaux Arts, a gallery situated in the shadow of the City Hall, where recently an exhibit of the works of Imoto Atsushi was held. This artist is noted particularly for his ability to combine wood and metal in complete harmony of design.
The workshop of Charles Pachter is located in an old bicycle shop on Shaw street, in Toronto’s Italian Quarter. Here, this 25-year-old English-Canadian artist who prides himself on his European ancestry carries on his search for what he calls 'the center of gravity of my existence'. Recognized in Toronto as one of Canada’s foremost engravers, Pachter began his studies in that city, later spending a year at the Sorbonne, and in 1964 he entered the Cranbrook Academy of Art in Michigan, where he obtained his Master of Fine Arts. In collaboration with the Canadian poet Margaret Atwood he recently published The Circle Game and Speeches for Doctor Frankenstein, and in Notebook Pages he illustrated the work of the Vancouver poet John Newlove.

The portraits of Alexander Pope

Long neglected by critics and scholars, the literature of 18th century England has recently attained great popularity in many quarters, and The Portraits of Alexander Pope, by William Kurtz Wimsatt, presents the greatest poet of the Augustan Age as he was seen by the most famous painters and sculptors of his day. Wimsatt’s book, published in 1965 by the Yale University Press and in Canada by McGill University Press, features 233 illustrations, of which four are in color. These include portraits by Charles Jervas, Godfrey Kneller, Michael Dahl, William Kent and William Hoare.

Antiquity of the Art of Painting

Felix da Costa, artist and critic of Portuguese art, lived between 1639 and 1712. With the exception of a few fragmentary excerpts, his manuscripts were never published. At the beginning of 1967, however, a reproduction of the original treatises were published by the Yale University Press, and distributed in Canada by McGill University Press. This work, together with annotated translation by the Yale Seminar on historical art texts, contains notes and introductions by George Kubler of Yale University.

Italian Architecture

Italian Architecture 1750-1914, by the late Carroll L. V. Weeks, one-time professor of history of architecture at Yale University, establishes a classification of all styles of architecture prevalent in Europe during the 18th century. This comprehensive work, published by Yale University Press and distributed in Canada by McGill University Press, contains 266 illustrations, including designs, plans and photographs of famous buildings of the era.

Gutenberg

In his recent work, Gutenberg and the Master of the Playing Cards, Hellmut Lehmann-Haupt, of the department of history of art, Yale University, reveals that Gutenberg, as well as inventor of the printing press, and famous for his edition of the Bible, excelled also as an illuminator of manuscripts of the Middle Ages. His book, published by Yale University Press, features numerous color reproductions of Gutenberg’s work, many of which are published for the first time.

Edgard Varése

Edgard Varése, by Fernand Ouellette, published by Seghers/H.M.H. Editions, is a comprehensive 234-page work which perfectly integrates the musical titan with his era. Long a friend of Varése, and having access to many personal documents and letters, Ouellette has produced, perhaps for the first time, a true picture of the genius he so fervently admires.

Joue Part du Monde

Texte l’Art du Monde presents the history of art in a series of lectures and pictures, dividing man’s creativity into four major segments: art in ancient times, the Middle Ages, from the Renaissance to the French Revolution, and modern art. The work features abundant illustrations, two black and white pages alternating with two pages of color, and is designed to appeal not solely to the professional, but to also delight the layman.

Terre des Hommes

Michele Lalonde’s poem, Terre des Hommes, set to music by André Prevost, was heard for the first time at the opening of Expo ‘67. This work is not strictly a musical offering, since the words are spoken, rather than sung, by two soloists, and repeated by a chorus, with orchestral background, but essentially it expresses the hopes and the agonies of modern man.