The Structural Hypothesis and the Phenomenological Postulate

Jennifer Oille

As places the London Film Makers Cooperative and the Lisson Gallery are unique. I know of no other film co-operative providing printing, processing, editing, filming, display and distribution facilities. Jonas Mekas' New York Film Makers' Co-op and Bruce Baillie's Canyon City only distribute. Dissatisfaction with conventional projection, sound and cinema circuits, the economic expedient of sharing facilities brought Malcolm Le Grice, Anne Allison, Nicholson, Peter Gidal, Gill Eatherley, David Crosswaite, Paul Hammond and Mike Dunford together in 1967 with subsequent creative, but not economic, prosperity. Until last year the British Film Institute granted funds only to individuals, the Arts Council only to artists to make films about their work (excluding film). Every year Dan Flavin, Sol Lewitt, Richard Long, Don Judd, Dorothea Rockburn, Carl Andre produce a profound and definitive statement, a moment in history, specifically for Nicholas Logsdail's contemporary collection. He offered them their first and only forum and so it is to Logsdail that one can owe the generation of a new form of British minimal, conceptual and process art (and much of the Tate's contemporary collection).

But what is made is more important than the place it is made in. And what is being made purports an aesthetic analogy between film and object built on an aim asserting the integrity of each object as object, film as film. They share three premises — the abstract expressionist view, that the act of creation remains clearly visible and implicit in the finished work, the minimal, that the parts, pared to essence and essence, remain distinct and analyzable within the whole; the reflexive, that the work be self-referential, alluding and illuding to nothing but itself, that the act of immediate perception be the basic context of an event's confrontation with the work. Both demand a structural definition on a phenomenological postulate.

The film makers are inherently political but theirs must be the first political statement without political content. Because there is no content. Because narrative is illusion it is authoritarian and manipulative and so cannot be used to break down its own devices. It imposes, through the process of identification, a set of alien aesthetic and social values on a passive viewer. Structural film asserts active, conscious and immediate analysis. Second narrative film is epistemologically borrowing concepts and models from other sources. So get on with film as film. Phenomenologically. The reinforcement of cinema from scratch, from celluloid, projector, light, screen, duration, shadow, emulsion, positive/negative reversals, optical duping reeling, a non-illusionistic, non-model oriented experience. The only reality is looking at the film. The in/film and film/viewer relations and the shape of the film are primary to any specific content. Content is only something on which the maker works to produce an event. The process of making the film is the film. Structural film is action-on film, and the process of active experience in relationship-to (viewing).

The results. Of Eatherley's «Light Occupations». The activators (projector and filmmaker) and their activity are filmed and screened simultaneously, the right screen being the result of what is actually occurring on the left screen. David Crosswaite's «The Man with the Movie Camera». In the centre of the screen we see a mirror. The camera slowly focuses on the mirror and we begin to see in it the filmmaker and the camera that is shooting the image we are seeing. Mike Dunford's «Deep Space». A long shot of a city street. Then a shot with hand held camera. The same with camera shaking sideways. Blur. Freeze. Each of his films is an hypothesis rather than an assertion. They are not about aesthetics, or ideas, or systems, but about film, film making, film viewing and the interaction and intervention of self conscious reasoning activity in the act of creating. Paul Hammond's «Eiffel Tower» brings fluidity to a fixed image of the Eiffel Tower. A number of projectors create an interaction between different pieces of film, and by using a variety of screens he erects an architectural structure echoing the shapes within the Eiffel Tower. The same with Nicholson's «Deep Space». The act of creating remain visible and implicit in the finished work; the minimal, that context. Paul Hammond's «Eiffel Tower» brings fluidity to a fixed image of the Eiffel Tower. A number of projectors create an interaction between different pieces of film, and by using a variety of screens he erects an architectural structure echoing the shapes within the Eiffel Tower. The same with Nicholson's «Deep Space».

From film to object. An inert symmetry, the absence of titles, the lack of climatic incident. From film to object. An inert symmetry, the absence of titles, the lack of climatic incident. From film to object. An inert symmetry, the absence of titles, the lack of climatic incident. The line has revealed a new vision of reality: to construct, literally, and not to represent, to be in the objective or the non-objective, to build constructivist, functional equipment in life and not from outside of life. The line is a system of object making based on a functional utilization of matter in order to reach a predetermined goal.

The members of the London Film Makers Co-operative show their work to the public every Wednesday night at their studio/cinema — 13a Prince of Wales Crescent, NW1. Sol Lewitt's The Location of the Line will be at the Lisson Gallery in May and June, 88 Bell Street, NW1.

The Museum in Flux

By André Paradis

The idea of the open, multidimensional and certainly complex function of the museum is beginning. What is dying to-day is the notion of the closed systematized entity, of the museum conceived as an exclusive place of conservation cut off from its primary obligation: to place works of art on view. This major transformation is not brought about without difficulty. By confusing the ideas of dimension and of function, through exaggerated showings which resemble the fair, we have endangered the real greatness, the raison d'être of the museum, which is to create the place of meeting with works, a place of friendship and discovery. At the time when Art, in search of freedom, descends into the street, the museum ought, on the contrary, to emphasize its distinctive character. Being responsible for the works it chooses and preserves, it must seek the presence of the public and do everything possible so that the latter will choose to come and live with the works an experience which appeals as much to intelligence as to feeling.

Can the museum really stimulate an environment? If it does not do this, it is unworthy of its rôle, and it would be a mistake to believe that stimulation is reserved for some museums rather than for others. Here again we must not confuse stimulation with promotion. Every
museum has its own stimulating vocation. In Quebec there are too few museums for the privilege of stimulus to be the preserve of a few institutions. What we must ensure for our museums, for those which depend on the state as for those which depend partially on private enterprise, are realistic conditions of development that take needs into account and allow for the use of collective equipment. It is necessary to understand museums, all museums, their order of importance matters little, in terms of a network indispensable to cultural life and to ensure them acceptable conditions of existence. Beyond regular and progressive financial support, we must work to make them autonomous, to give them the options of development that encourage the presence of the public, to give them the possibility of re-inventing the means of direct information and, particularly, of fostering research by creating many positions in conservation and in the educational area.

Finally, it would be helpful to exchange a certain conforming security for risk, creation and invention, to tear ourselves away from what claims to solve everything, to dare, to consider life, the world and the museum as open systems. A policy of museums passes logically through a policy of man, who is the principal user of them.

(Translation by Mildred Grand)

PREAMBLE TO ALLEYN’S SUITE QUÉBÉCOISE

By Guy Robert

Born in Quebec in 1931, Edmund Alleyn studied at the School of Fine Arts there. His remarkable talent as a draughtsman inspired him from 1954 to produce brilliant works of great skill in the wake of painters such as Picasso, De Kooning or Pellan. A revelation of Nicholas de Staël. In Paris from 1955 to 1970, returning a few times to Quebec. In 1957 he deepened his plastic experience by sculpting strange little sarco­phagi from which soon arose an abundant series of non-figurative pictures made up of stenographic symbols on backgrounds of a rich chromatic material. In 1964 these abstract Expressionist paintings borrowed their new appearance from the mythology of the American Indian, and the background of the picture became landscape. The picture dance therefore became figurative once more. Already sunsets appeared. And also, more thickly, fantasy, humour, the taste for play. In Paris, between 1966 and 1969, a few series of schematized paintings, permeated with science-fiction, with cybernetic obsession, with terrifying surgery: the suites of the Zooms, Conditionnements, Agressions. From 1968 to 1970 the adventure of the Introscape entered upon a sort of synthesis of the sensory perceptions and plastic proposals tested until that time by Alleyn. And it is electronics, already incorporated into some works from 1965 on, that appeared to attract the artist to a greater degree, the artist becoming a conceptor, a film producer, an engineer of the senses, a missionary of the synesthesis. On the threshold of the televisial images of the era, he produced a strange picture titled Marine, in 1968: in front of a sunset perfumed with psychedelic flavour, we see the profile of a prehuman still weighted down by his simian skeleton.

The Twilights of La Suite québécoise

The two sunsets of 1964 and 1965 mentioned above thus serve as prelude to Suite québécoise on which Edmund Alleyn concentrated his energies in 1967 and 1974, since his suite comprises six large pictures representing sunsets, and accompanied by thirty figures painted life-size on panels of transparent acrylic, the whole intended to form one and the same place, to rise in one same space, a same room, an enigmatic format.

Let us stop first at the pictures, while emphasizing that the artist sees them as inseparable from their figures. But since, when all is said and done, we cannot say everything at the same time, nor can we ever say everything...

The crepuscular perspective of the two preceding sunsets suggests an atmosphere that always permeates the end of the day, the expression of a disturbing ambiguity: in 1964, that of the Amerind cultures of Canada, cast in detached pieces into the sky of the landscape, floating like stuffed relics on the surface of the water. The work of the painter, detailed and scrupulous in his fidelity to models, reveals a pleasure in painting not very consistent with the tone of parody or satire: in other respects, the allusions of virtually impossibility that he did to focus on to such patience appeared to so large a surface. And to confuse the trails further, the artist attaches to this palmygrove a musical band giving forth the chant of a saxophone such as can be heard in some bars set up so that we feel comfortable, in the simplicity of the semi-darkness.

A similar complicity seems necessary in front of the Suite québécoise. Indispensable con­nivance, or at least abandon, availability, accep­tance.

The four other landscapes of the Suite show their setting sun on a lake, or behind a detail of the landscape, the purest tree Sanders, that vades the whole pictorial rectangle and offers to the patient viewer a haunting list of micro­scenes and symbols; either on a large diphy½ch which on extends on the floor, or finally on an ethereal seascape, from nowhere.

At the centre of these six landscapes we find the same obsession, that of time which passes and which the artist sets, pathetically and romantically, at twilight, as in a dizzy respite at the very threshold of night, and therefore of death. This remission removes the agonizing burden, or at least relieves it somewhat, and turns the scene that has been created into a sort of timeless parenthesis. And by extension, beyond space. Expressed otherwise, a non-place, in the legal sense.

The inhabitants of this non-place

There would be a great deal to be said about Alleyn’s palette in the six landscapes of his Suite québécoise, and in particular that it is all at once drawn, with the brush, with the help of masks and with certain ranges of colours that this tool allows (without mentioning illus, orange tones, etc.): about the different stylistic orientations, which multiply the divergent approaches precisely to control the mannered condensing in one single choice. One after another, or all at once, romantic, sentimental, cerebral, humorous, ironic, impressionist, the painter combines the, the psychedelic, quétainerlere (a kitc made in Quebec), painting by numbers. Hard­edge, etc., and asserts that each picture exists in the legal sense.

And yet these figures seem at first to be in no way related to the landscapes. The painter photographed them on the sky during the summer of 1972 and 1973, in the midst of the motley crowd moving about in the La Ronde amusement park in Montreal, and transposed them faithfully, with the appropriate plastic simplifications, each preserving in a strange and striking manner its original lighting, incorporated in some way into the clothing and the attitude of each, which further accentuates the primary independence between landscapes and paintings.

The first plan of the Suite intended retaining a hundred of these figures from the collection of these numerous photographs, in
Hyperrealism then? And immediately there come to mind certain figures by Alfred Leslie, Audrey Flack, Douglas Bond, Thiébaut, certain landscapes by John Cleem Clarke or Paul Staiger, Richard McLean’s compositions and, more particularly, the figures painted on mirrors by Pistoleto and the figures which stand out in Marial Rayesse’s pictures. And yet Alleyne’s Suite québécoise allows itself to be reduced to nothing of that sort.

Chiefly, because it is a matter of a suite, a chain (linguistic), a speech, an ensemble, a link and a site, a binding to multiple and reciprocal consequences, in short, of a global situation where something must happen. A ceremonial, in this way that it is a question of a festival, mysterious, of a ritual in six pictures, of a last supper under the twilight appearance of time suspended in its inexorable course, and of thirty officiating priests secretly torn from their triple daily life and parachuted into a sacred enclosure. We are reminded of Stonehenge, of the tower of Babel, of the large statues of Easter Island, of the mysteries of Eleous of the Sphinx.

The enigma of the six sunsets, simultaneous and yet so different from each other, and that of the thirty effigies scrupulously depicted on the view side, in the outfits and accessories, but which turn their reverse side (we might as well say their sombre double) toward the impenetrable last ray of the day.

Therefore it is in this way that plural ambiguity spreads and grows through Alleyne’s Suite québécoise, in a setting of a disturbing complexity. Simultaneously sacred and profane, holy and trivial, serious and facetious, the Suite rejects the system of fashions and their inevitable weariness of the mind.

Therefore it is in this way that plural ambiguity spreads and grows through Alleyne’s Suite québécoise, in a setting of a disturbing complexity. Simultaneously sacred and profane, holy and trivial, serious and facetious, the Suite rejects the system of fashions and their inevitable weariness of the mind.

It is no longer a question of images but of icons. Nor of re-presenting, but of presenting well, causing to be present. And meaningful. What does the signified matter, since it must be as numerous and contradictory like the real of which it too often becomes an opaque makeup, verbose and superficials. Between rhetoric and painting, painting with... Alleyne, during the course of a brilliant career lasting twenty years had become a professional artist. With all that this implies of system, preparation, trade-mark. With his Suite québécoise, he discovered again the original flavour of the art, of manner, of polen, of the poem. The suite is open.

An ambiguous ceremonial

It involves quite another thing too, and similar questions would risk removing us from the centre of gravity of the work, from its concrete and plastic reality. This reality is presented somewhat like a puzzle: nothing is served by insisting on examining one single piece of it, by accepting as an established fact, a clinical or sociological sampling or of a speech for the defence, perhaps, in aid of the spontaneous feelings of the man in the street (and at La Ronde) in so far as it is opposed to the conditioned sensitivity of the elite, the upstarts in culture, the minorities of the elite, the upstarts in culture, the minorities.

One hundred years ago, in 1874, the City of Montreal entrusted to Frederick Law Olmsted the development of Mount Royal Park. The land destined for this purpose, namely some four hundred thirty acres, had been exclusively reserved for the era, all the more since Montreal then had only 110,000 inhabitants. But the little city, already engaged for some time in the process of urbanization, was beginning to benefit from the results of an expanding economy, which was reflected in its pride and its ambitions. Had Montreal not created, in 1854-1859, Victoria Bridge, considered at that time the work of science and the most gigantic engineering undertaking in the world, the eighth wonder of the world? Or had it not itself the right to share in the movement for the creation of urban parks, following the lead of the principal cities of Europe, of New York with its famous Central Park and of several other big American cities.

The choice of Olmsted, famous then as the most eminent landscape architect of the continent, was imperative to assure Montreal of a park worthy of its rank. But the American developer was to bring more than simple prestige to our city: he was also to leave here the evidence of a social ideal and of a special vision of the role of nature in the urban fabric. Without possessing the span of the scheme of Central Park, executed, Olmsted suggested for Mount Royal nevertheless reveals the broad outlines of his conceptions of landscape architecture, as well as his objectives of social democracy. Because one of the characteristics of Olmsted’s landscape, was precisely his ability to translate the philosophy and the ideals of the social reformers of his era into physical developments.

It was also in response to the aspirations of the social reformers, be they disciples of Jeremy Bentham in England, Charles Fourier in France, the William Channings, Henry Bellows, or Horace Bushnell in the United States, convinced of mitigating the moral and social ills of the working classes of large industrial cities, that there dawned, in the 19th century, the movement for urban parks. These reformers, poor judges of a techno-economic system then in full gestation, sincerely believed that by delimiting the territory of the urban environment through access to recreation, by bettering the qualities of the urban environment, these social ills and disorders would disappear by themselves.

The introduction of nature into the city, with its potential of cleaning the urban fabric and of regenerating the soul, appeared eminently desirable to them.

Olmsted shared these ideas and this ideal. Thus he would write in his report on Mount Royal Park: “It is a great mistake to suppose that the value of charming natural scenery lies wholly in the inducement which the enjoyment of it presents to change of mental occupation, to Nature, and its influence on health and will.”

3. The annual gathering together besides his Suite québécoise an impressive collection of post cards, photographs, different objects (latches?), sketches, etc. The suite is open.

THE CENTENARY OF MOUNT ROYAL PARK

By Jean-Claude MARSAN

One hundred years ago, in 1874, the City of Montreal entrusted to Frederick Law Olmsted...
Revolution.

From this point of view, Mount Royal, a territory very little affected by previous residential development and of the highest natural splendor, as he himself recognized [4], offered Olmsted an exceptional opportunity of putting his ideas into practice. And as he mentioned in his report, the development program of this area was already outlined by the potential of the site and the charm of its landscapes... (underfell), those steep flanks themselves, forming the most dramatic element of the site, their crown (upperfell), which corresponds to the summit and which descends in a gentle slope toward the clearing (glades), a shallow depression at the foot of which Beaver Lake is located to-day.

For each of the sectors thus identified, Olmsted suggested landscape developments suited to intensifying the natural characteristics and the qualities of the already existing landscapes. For instance, he recommended that the upperfells of the park be planted with species of trees with trunks reaching their best and highest stature. He also suggested that the crags of the mountain be planted in such a way as to appear as high as possible and that, by contrast, the calm, serene character of Piedmont and Côte Placide be respected. He further insisted that the glades retain their character of gentle depression, a sector rendered more attractive by the presence of a reservoir (unfortunately, too geometric in form for the setting). In short, as A. L. Murray has well noted, one of the objectives pursued by Olmsted in these types of developments is humanization of the natural topography of the site, and of causing the mountain to appear higher than it is in reality.

Finally, the social goal aspired to by Olmsted, to be able to make the city-dweller benefit by a regenerative contact with nature, is clearly reflected in his development of the network of the park's roads of access and promenade. With a site of such topography, there was a strong temptation to polarize all the interest on the upperfells to have them enjoy the views and to bring them back afterwards to the city by the shortest roads. Olmsted was able to avoid this trap: he and the commissioners responsible for the creation of the park on their guard against this temptation, acting cautiously as to lift the people into the upperfells to have them enjoy the views and to bring them back afterwards to the city by the shortest roads. He proposed rather an access road for vehicles (horse-drawn) joining the lines of least resistance to the natural topography and leading the city-dweller toward the upperfells only by roads running parallel and by stops and by windows on the city, allowing in this way a great variety of perceptual experiences. And, another sign of his genius, he completed this primary network with a secondary system of paths reserved for pedestrians, our two means of movement.

We can therefore assume that we would not be able to appreciate fully the development of Mount Royal without reference to the ideals of the era and the special conception which Olmsted had of the role of nature in the urban environment. There is no doubt — without intending to give an opinion on this point — that these ideals have been changed since then and that the strong demographic growth which has taken place in the Metropolis has caused Mount Royal Park to lose its original purpose as a natural reservation suitable to the assurance of a privileged city-dweller's contact with nature. Nevertheless, Olmsted had foreseen this danger and had put the commissioners on guard against a wrong use of the park: "If it is to be cut up with roads and walks, spotted with shelters and streaked with staircases... and if thousands of people are to seek their recreation upon it unrestrained, they will certainly lose its special character and it will be impossible to lose whatever of natural charm you first saw in it." In the light of the objective pursued by Olmsted, we can appreciate better today the justice of this warning.

For footnotes see French text.

(Translation by Mildred Grand)

GOOD LUCK IN HUNTING: JAMES BAY INDIAN ART

By Ted J. BRASHER

Porcupine quills, deerskin, feathers, and glass beads, silk ribbons, woolen cloth; the world of spiritual and material making of Indian and colonial White Canada, visually documented in an outstanding collection of early Indian arts and crafts, recently acquired by the National Museum of Man in Ottawa. Two hundred and fifty-nine objects in total, representing the major native Canadian art traditions east of the Rocky Mountains during the 18th and early 19th centuries. Given this age, the importance of the Speyer Collection is immediately obvious: traditional arts and crafts were still fully alive at that time, but all too few examples have been preserved in museums.

In addition to the documentation of native creativity, the collection provides us with a colourful picture of the complex and fertile impact of European trade goods and prototypes upon the Indian art traditions.

The substantial discussion of the total collection is impossible within the context of this article. The selection to a small selection, however, enables us to offer this contribution as a posthumous homage to an ancient but desired results and the well-being of the people. This would be a dream of the naturists, the hunting, trapping, and fishing, that is, in man's dependence upon the goodwill if not the love of the animal spirits. The sacred quality of wild game meat was emphasized in the Makoshika, a highly ritualized communal meal of caribou or bear meat, held in honour of the spirits governing the game, a meal in which the great importance of animal in the traditional economy of the people. The caribou served as the major part of the diet and the raw materials for clothing. However, both this as well as through the subsistence of the game animals, man depended upon the plants of the forest for his food and medicine.

The ritual techniques to manipulate the forces of nature originated from certain philosophical concepts which were understood throughout the eastern boreal forest. Basic among these was the belief that a soul-spirit resided in each natural phenomenon. Through the study and interpretation of his dreams, man cultivated an intense communication and knowledge of his soul-spirit. In exchange, this spirit assisted the hunter in establishing a love-relationship with the spirits of the animals and other natural phenomena. Some of these might give a dream-song to the hunter, others might instruct him in the art of hunting, divination, or water control. Seeking to strengthen his relationship with the spirits, a man would frequently concentrate his thoughts and will-power in the presence of his dream-songs, the sound of a drum, or by smoking his pipe.

Part of the instructions given by the soul-spirit consisted of symbolic designs, executed on clothing, pouches, weapons, and other tools. It is in this context that we can explain the widespread belief that the animals preferred to be handled by their souls-spirits. Moreover, all animal decorated clothing. Likewise, the decoration warned evil Cannibal Giants that these hunters were under the protection of powerful spirits. After his death, the hunter's soul-spirit joined those of the deceased in the sky, where they manifested themselves as stars and danced in the northern lights.

This strong emphasis upon the cultivation of an individual relationship with spirits explains the great variety both in magico-religious practice as well as in artistic expression. Yet, even a rapid survey of both aspects reveals the great variety both in magico-religious practices, and in artistic expression. Yet, even a rapid survey of both aspects reveals the great variety both in magico-religious practices. In the context of this article, the ritual techniques to manipulate the forces of nature, the ideas and images, the decoration being executed by women, the decoration being executed by women, and the art of the deceased in the sky, where they manifested themselves as stars and danced in the artistic expression.

From antique specimens preserved in museums it appears that the aboriginal art tradition was fully alive, but all too few examples have been preserved in museums. At the same time having specific and secret connotations known only to the dreamer and the artist.

To the Indian hunters around James Bay, their world was sacred, and so were all inter-
compositions. Jacques Rousseau pointed out that the spread of this art tradition largely coincided with that of the paper birch. Directed by their soul-spirit, the native women in this area used to fold sheets of paper-thin birch bark and bite patterns in them, producing prototypes of the designs which they executed in their art. Materially, this art was expressed in paintings on skin, wood, stone, bark, porcupine quillwork on skin, engravings on wood and bone, and etching on birch bark. Three-dimensional sculpture was extremely rare.

After the coming of the White fur traders in the late 17th century, and the subsequent introduction of European materials, several of these and other products were produced in the way customary with the use of European tools. Sometimes, even these Whites themselves were hardly aware of the roots of their decorative art in an ancient but lost sacred world conception. During the 18th and 19th centuries, semi-realistic floral decorations of European origin were adjusted to fit the aboriginal patterns, until the originality was overshadowed by the latter in many regions. Museum collections, however, show that in the development of this art tradition an interpretation of nature through abstract and conventional designs preceded an imitation of nature in the recent floral style. And although there is evidence that the aboriginal patterns, until the originality was overshadowed by the latter in many regions. 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them. They had been the subject of several narratives, of which the most important were those of soldier Hans Staden (1557), of Franciscan friar André Thévet (1558), and of preacher de Léry (1578), all illustrated with engravings. Ancient maps always showed them as, for instance, to mention only one, the map of Brazil by Wenceslas Hollar (1676), which was preserved at the Huntington Library (Los Angeles). But the collection of images that would have the greatest influence was that of the Flemish engraver and goldsmith, Théodore de Bry, in his great work in eleven volumes entitled America, the third tome, which appeared between 1591 and 1595. It included the various illustrations of Montaigne's cannibals. Plate 12, which we reproduce here, describes these as being on account of their subject—a cannibals' feast where women and children are luring their fingers over a feast of human flesh—places us immediately in the historical context. It was inspired directly by figure 48 of the Wahrhaftige Historia und Beschreibung einer Landschaft der Wilden, Nackten, Grimmgigen Menschfredder Lenthen in der Newen Welt America...by Hans Staden, published in Marburg in 1557. From engraved wood to engraved steel, and from illustrations of some invasions and displacements, we find the same figures in the same postures, occupied in the same actions. But how has history changed? For Staden's Gothic models for the engraver, De Bry substituted those of the Renaissance, and it was in the antique manner that he had been trained in his youth, that he had lived in a state of nature. Living closer to the origins, "virí a diás recientes", to take from Montaigne a quotation from Seneca², the Amerinds were represented with all the features of those who, for De Bry, were the nearest to original perfection: the ancients. Instead of characterizing primitive mankind by racial traits, as we have learned to do since the nineteenth century, he adorned them with the glamour of classical beauty and represented them as the Greeks and the Romans used to represent their gods. De Bry's information came from Staden, but he gave a modern and definite form to the representations of the travellers, for the imaginations of the next centuries. No one will doubt that in this way he coincided better than anyone else with the image that the great Montaigne had of them.

Adorning the Tupinambás with the forms of gods of antiquity, having them live in the golden age, giving them as an example to our warped cultures, appearing to place them so high, did not truly help their cause. An image which had nothing to do with reality was substituted for the real Tupinambás. When an image, even a flattering one, is substituted for reality, communication is not advanced by it. The recognition of the cannibal virtues did not, in the mind of Montaigne, exclude the enterprise of civilization. He regretted only that the new world was not conquered by Alexander or by those ancient Greeks and Romans... who would have gently polished and cleared away whatever was barbarous in them, and would have strengthened and fostered the good seeds that nature had produced in them, not only adding to the cultivation of the earth and the adornment of cities the arts of our side of the ocean, in so far as they would have been necessary, but also adding the Greek and Roman virtues to those of their own...Contradiction: Oberon and Titania (1854-1858; private collection) are marked by a maniacal taste for detail, by a microcosmic vision of perfect clarity; these are fairy worlds, remote from the scene of a waterlilies of a drop of water, a swarm, but perfectly ordered, a microcosm of persons, plants, flowers, insects painted with the accuracy of a naturalist. According to the words of a contemporary visitor, "Each detail is rendered with a meticulousness and a wonderful finish, which could have been achieved only with the help of the magnifying-glass he offers the viewer to allow him to examine this work of art." Dadd's highly individual and ascetic paintin

Therefore we could quite easily sneer at these Romans of America imagined by the men of the end of the sixteenth century, but this would be to forget that in our times of great knowledge and fine objectivity, the fascination of the golden age has not ended. It is true that it is expressed in another way. But how shall we not think that the world-wide tourist industry does not feed our imagination in another manner while calling to mind the sunny beaches where we are free to go nude and to put aside the restraints of our civilized world? What was it that Montaigne said of the Tupinambás?

"This is a nation...I should say to Plato, in which there is not a sign of traffic, no knowledge of letters, no science of numbers, no name for a magistrate or for political superiority, no custom of servitude, no riches or poverty, no contracts, no successes, no partitions, no occupations but leisure ones, no care for any but common kinship, no clothes, no agriculture, no metal, no use of wine or wheat."

Is it not paradoxical that the tourist agencies promise to our businessmen, to our unwinding executives, tired of "trade", of "figures", of "politics, wealth or poverty", of "contracts, estates and ships", will fill the ordinary course of their days? Is it not, life not even in this very able necktie that they will get rid of here, allowing them to go without "vestments". Also, the golden age is a region of the civilized mind, a nostalgia that it represses but which it needs in order not to lose its equilibrium. All America excludes its Hawaii (paradise is an island) and expresses in it, in a Hollywood décor of card-board and artificial flowers, the form of its inhibitions.

The unhappy part of this is that what he represses in himself, modern man oppresses outside of himself. Touristic dreaming is concomitant to colonialism.

3. J. Ch. Libélula, 30-44, "Men fresh sprung from the gods".

(Translation by Mildred Grand)

RICHARD DADD IN LONDON

By Jean-Loup BOURGET

Richard Dadd, born in 1817, studied painting, showing signs of a talent in conformity with the spirit of the times: before the pre-Raphaelite revolution of 1848. Nevertheless, with William Power Frith, Augustus Egg and others he created a group called The Clique, which intended to break the monopoly of the Royal Academy, and which evidenced, by its concern for contemporary subjects, certain aspects of pre-Raphaelism. However, the work of these painters, very gifted technically, contains nothing profoundly innovating. Dadd especially painted fairy-like subjects, which were legal currency in the Victorian era (Jeremy Mass devoted a chapter to them in his Victorian Painters). He took a trip to the Orient (1842-1843), and during which he began to show signs of being unbalanced; the first confessional that he felt he was going crazy from having too many details to solve, that he did not know where to begin his sketches, although there were many. On his return, he savagely killed his father (in English papa = «dad»; we see an important linguistic key to Richard's madness here), and escaped to France; he was arrested and confined in Bethlem Hospital, near London, for ten years (1846-1856); artistic activity was revived, encouraged by the superintendent of the hospital (for therapeutic or simply humanitarian reasons?). Then he continued his work in Broadmoor, where he died in 1866. During his lifetime he had not managed to complete oblivion, since several times he was visited by amateurs interested in his work. After his death, a few of these continued to seek his works, Sacheverell Sitwell in particular. But the rediscovery of Dadd is essentially a recent event, inspired by an article in Time magazine (April 25, 1969), with a full-page reproduction in colour (mediocre) of his most famous and most enigmatic picture, The Fairy Feller's Master Stroke; the inclusion of Dadd in the Parisian exhibition, La Peinture romantique anglais et les préraphaélites (1972); the publication of David Greysmith's book Richard Dadd: The Rock and the Water Lily, Stroud, 1972; finally, the exhibition at the Tate Gallery. On the other hand, Dadd's name was not even mentioned in John Piper's Painting in England, 1500-1880 (1965).

David Greysmith says somewhere in his book that the subtitle The Rock and Castle of Suspect Juan... he was a noteworthy phenomenon, outside of the commercial sphere and the necessity in which most painters find themselves, of feeding a family, of finding a public, buyers, favourable critics... On account of his madness (which today would be diagnosed, it seems, as paranoic schizophrenia). Dadd was isolated from his contemporaries, and he carried scarcely any relationships other than with the other male inmate of Bethlem or Broadmoor. Through his gratuitousness, his painting escapes commercial chance and its social function. A double revelation, psychological and sociological, which makes all the conclusion striking the statement that at the conclusion of this process, Dadd appears as the typical painter of the Victorian vision, close to his pre-Raphaelite contemporaries, especially Holman Hunt, Sir Noel Paton...
ing therefore carries to their height many of the favorite trends of the Victorian era; whether it involves horror vacui, a taste for meticulous fairylands, or naturalism properly so called (the methodical and, as it were, scientific observation of the forms of nature). We think, therefore, to be useful to Holman Hunt or to Tommyn's "Vanity Fair," to compare the treatment of nature by his father-in-law (his father-in-law's work: Richard Dadd, 1852. private collection or The Virtue of Reason)[1]. Yet, in less upheavals and in a pose more_addressed, to the subject of the problem of the art of the century. In the pages of the British Museum, we have a double vision of Richard Dadd's work, in his role of a dandy and as a madman. The two sides, a dandy and a madman, are not really opposed, but are related in a way that is often neglected. Dadd, the dandy, is the artist of the Victorian era, the artist who seeks to express himself in a way that is both personal and universal. He is the artist who seeks to express the beauty of nature, the beauty of the human body, and the beauty of the soul. He is the artist who seeks to express the power of the mind, the power of the imagination, and the power of the spirit. He is the artist who seeks to express the joy of life, the joy of beauty, and the joy of art. He is the artist who seeks to express the hope of a better world, the hope of a better future, and the hope of a better tomorrow. He is the artist who seeks to express the love of beauty, the love of art, and the love of life.

The Dadd's work is characterized by a sense of the beauty of nature, the beauty of the human body, and the beauty of the soul. He is the artist who seeks to express the power of the mind, the power of the imagination, and the power of the spirit. He is the artist who seeks to express the joy of life, the joy of beauty, and the joy of art. He is the artist who seeks to express the hope of a better world, the hope of a better future, and the hope of a better tomorrow. He is the artist who seeks to express the love of beauty, the love of art, and the love of life.
as a sculpture eight feet in height, in Old Montreal. In other respects, the latter gives the impression of being about twenty feet high.

The evolution of the work reveals, in recent years, the diversity of forms that can be assumed by reliefs of the separation on the surface of the mass or of the volume, and the separation of the mass of the rectangularellipsoid. Still close to the slit or the telluric digging of former magmas, the separation into dents or zigzags allows no more than a broken line to appear, once the two components of the work are closely linked. The separation appears with a dark violence.

In this regard it would be interesting to analyse the psychological base of the work, in which the theme of the couple appears very early as a basic function.

The harshness and the force of the relation are diminished only when the masses are quite far from each other, or when they are completely joined: by its dynamism, the break introduces a kinetic quality, which, besides, attains its end in the real kinetics of Allegro-cube, equipped with an electronic mechanism which makes the two parts of the cube slowly meet and part. Once separated, the masses become self-sufficient objects, thanks to the strict proportional function of each smooth volume, with geometric contours of static function, with its broken surface of dynamic function. Doubtless Michel Seuphor would see in this a happy marriage of style and noisy affirmation.

According to the materials, bronze, alloys, crenels or plastic substances (dull or transparent), the implicit relation (this, by the way, is the title of one of the key sculptures) is shown by a joint in a broken line, by the steps of a helicoidal movement and it seems that it reveals its most perfect accomplishment, in a curve that is technically the development of a very complex mathematical formula. The aesthetic result of this formula is to unite with the mas­iveness and the coldness of the cube the suppleness and the sensuality of the curved surface, in other respects always in implicit movement.

Finally, in most of these sculptures, the masses are not carved in perfect symmetry, but often by broken lines, therefore as a break­ing balance, as is the case in masses of the monumental ensemble at Complexe G in Que­bec.

This relation of equilibrium was developed in another way, at the time of the creation of one of the models for the monumental bronze of the National Arts Centre in Ottawa. The developments on this theme of the lateral relation of two masses joined at the base, which plays the role of pivot, follow the same road explained above in connection with the cube: surface is liberated from reliefs, line and profile become pre-eminent in the mass. There also, the dynamic and the tension is transferred to the transparence or the qualities of polished surface of the new materials add to the qualities of the profile, to the detriment of the mass. However, the basic functioning, the relation between coupled volumes, remains. Equilibre Latéral, La Régle du Jeu, Transparence affine, Point de congélation and Forces symétriques of the profile, to the detriment of the mass. These qualities of tremendous size, balance and harmony, whose components are, according to the sculptures, the relation between two masses, the actual single mass, and the treatment of the material, formerly lyrical then more minimalizing and finally the kinetic quality, are combined in an aesthetic which offers to the contemporary world, and in its language, the sumptuous majesty of a work that derives the force of a great classic from ancestral sources of the ritual of the couples.

To-day we see the outcome of a creativity which began to express itself thirty years ago, in solitude, by synthesis between the lan­guage of Fernand Léger and a graphic inter­pretation of surrealism.

Is it possible to forget that the characteristics of the profound personality of Charles Daudelin will find there a special resonance? Almost all of the work, from the gouaches and the oils at the beginning, the terra-cotta, bears witness to a successful synthesis between an interior world, often expressed in half-hidden reliefs, half revealed, and the sensual forces of the mass.

Those are some of the dominant characteristics of a generous and powerful work, which is to-day in the very first rank.

(Translation by Mildred Grand)

MONIQUE CHARBONNEAU IN THE LAND OF WOOD-ENGRAVING

By Ginette DESLAURIERS

Last August Monique Charbonneau came back to Quebec after a sojourn of a few months in Japan. On looking at her and on listening to her, we soon appreciate the enthusiasm that inflames her. Our curiosity is pricked to the quick: what did she go to seek in Japan? What did she bring back from there?

From Quebec to Japan, that is an unusual trip for Quebec artists. It is necessary, in fact, to have not only a fully formed and determined, which are not lacking in Monique Charbonneau, but also to possess besides a substantial craft to dare to compare her work with that of Japanese artists in a domain where they excel, that of wood-engraving.

If Monique Charbonneau has been a recognized engraver for several years, here as abroad — we know that she previously exhibited in Toronto, New York, Santiago, Ljubljana and elsewhere —, it was first as a painter that she compelled recognition in the Montreal milieu as early as 1960. Associated with this, the period 1960 to 1965, she regularly presented to art lovers and collectors solo exhibitions which have afforded us the opportunity of following her development.

We can trace three major periods in her painting: first, that of abstract lyricism recalling the wide luminous tracings of Zao Wou-ki; following this a semi-figurative, semi-abstract period, an interval where we can already discern certain clearly defined forms in an abstract landscape; finally, her latest works are clearly related to figuration (for example, the series of medallions).

It was neither through lassitude nor through a lack of inspiration that Monique Charbonneau orientated herself toward engraving. These two professions of painter and engraver would share her time and her energy for several years. Previously, at the time of her sojourn in Paris (from 1957 to 1959), she was attracted by graphic art. On her return, an exhibition at the Studio des artistes du Canada inspired the pupils of Albert Dumouchel inspired in her an interest which prompted her to enter this new path. On the presentation of works in painting and drawing, she was accepted into the engraving class and began the long apprenticeship in this craft under the instruc­tion of Albert Dumouchel.

What does engraving signify for this painter already highly esteemed and for whom painting is very successful? To this question Monique Charbonneau answers: “At the exhibition of engravings by the pupils of Dumouchel, I was struck by the element of the whole. One felt in them a mastery of the technique allied to an uncommon concern for originality. Further, the discipline that such a craft requires was able to counterbalance the spontaneity of the gesture I practised in painting.”

Monique Charbonneau demands first of engraving a technical support for her art. But, little by little, contact — I would almost say hands-on — with the different materials to be engraved revealed to her an interest in engraving for its own sake. This was an important step. Without abandoning painting, she applied herself to the graphic arts with tenacity, fervour and success, and she found: “Engraving is something unique,” she tells us. “Whence comes its importance for a painter. What I express through engraving I cannot say by painting. Graphic art is an act of writing, of drawing, of line. Each material and each technique of impression involves its requirements and furnishes specific results.”

For eleven years Monique Charbonneau has carried on in turn etching, lithography, silk-screening and engraving on wood which she taught for five years at the School of Fine Arts, then at UGAM. “Wood engraving is the technique that interests me most, undoubtedly on account of the material which is more responsive than the copper or zinc plate. Wood answers better the gesture of the engraver who must sculpt the material to be printed. It is also more easily handled than highly lithography stone. I like wood, the material which gives me pleasure in looking at it, in manipulating it, in bringing out the beauty of its grain, in grooving it, in giving it a new depth and relief by means of the original form which is born of the gouge or of the chisel.”

Nevertheless her studies, her teaching, her studio work were not enough to satisfy her fully. Monique Charbonneau requires the support of a tradition. Quebec has several engravers of great talent, of whom the leaders are the generation instructed by Albert Dumouchel. But this country, too young to have a national engraving school, needs the introduction to artists. This lack is felt by Monique Charbonneau, who does not aspire only to a perfect technical mastery, but who seeks a spirit which the gesture does not exhaust. “Art and life are one,” she tells us. So she naturally turned to Japan, this land dedicated to engraving.

Last winter, through the intervention of René Dourin, of Editions Formart, she met the Jap­aneese engraver Rei Yuki, passing through Mon­real after exhibiting in New York and Toronto. Keenly interested in Monique Charbonneau’s work, he introduced her to the world of engraving in his country. Our engraver needed nothing more to cause her to pack her bags and take flight as Japan as soon as spring came. All barriers fell.
before the firmness of her enterprising spirit. Upon her arrival, a thrilling experience was offered to her: to work with Yoshida, one of the present masters of wood engraving. He never accepted more than three or four engravers at one time in his studio in Tokyo. During the few months of this stay, she accomplished an intensive work, learning the Japanese technique, of which she appreciated above everything the strictness and the concern for perfection. These qualities are, undoubtedly, the fruit of this famous tradition which weighs heavily on Japanese artists. One cannot permit oneself to improvise in this craft when one has before his eyes the works of great masters such as Utamaro, Hiroshige, Hokusai. This direct contact with the great Japanese engravers revealed to her, besides, the love and even the worship they devote to papers. These, of a quality superior to ours by reason of their longer fibres, are at the same time smoother, more supple, and stronger. Japanese imprinting is better served by them. The paper distinguishes itself from the wooden block without requiring excessive pressure. It thus renders the most misty shades with fidelity. For inking, the engraver prefers the paintbrush to the roller. He uses watercolours, liquid and transparent, following in this way the tradition of water-colour painting. This process allows the superposition of colours of different intensity, of a great subtlety and a remarkable refinement. But it demands, on the other hand, a great sureness of performance and a rather exact precision of the final result. The print is then pulled with the baren, a stump which makes possible variations of pressures and therefore of colour.

Monique Charbonneau told us: "I wish to assimilate the Japanese technique and not to substitute it for my own technique." Engraving is a whole: the process does not create a work of art. The artist must have something to say. Monique Charbonneau recognizes very well that one cannot simply import a tradition. But her experience at Yoshida's studio enlarged her means of expression. "Engraving in a gentle slope, in a gradual range of colours, characteristic of Japanese imprinting, is of value for the representation of scenery," she explained. "The fine texture of the baren enabling the engraver to render with difficulty the tones which certain images call for: skies, snows, waters, etc. The subtlety of the passages is often badly ensured by our technique. Nevertheless, my images, those which are the source of the pictures I am working on here, are a Quebec artist, not a Japanese one. What I have brought back from Japan is not limited to the acquisition of a new process. I consider that sojourn as a total interior enrichment. Is it because of the spirit which animates the tradition of printing among Japanese engravers that I have discovered in work with my hands, with my soul. It is impossible not to be sensitive to their love and respect for the craft. They command admiration. I, have, besides, found these same qualities in a great number of artists whom I met thanks to Re Yuliand.

Monique Charbonneau also has left something of herself in Japan: a series of engravings exhibited at the Gin Gallery in Tokyo, from the tenth to the sixteenth of September, 1973. This solo exhibition is an notable achievement for one of our artists. Therefore, we shall follow with interest the future accomplishments of Monique Charbonneau. The field of engraving...

THE ACTIVE PRESENCE OF THE COZI-OBJECTS

by Jacques de ROUSSAN

In following one by one the steps in the route that Yvon Cozic has followed since 1965, we are witnessing the awareness of the life of the object, not only the life that springs from spatial occupation so called, but also that revealed by the influence of the milieu and the whole of its sensorial perceptions. Let us add to that a temporal conception founded on the ephemeral and we arrive at what art presents in the most concrete: the active presence.

Because, for Cozic, it is not so much the material that counts as the value it acquires in spatial or social context, and which it develops through its integration with a natural dynamism submitted to all the variations and pressures that man, as much as nature, imposes.

There was therefore no question for him to sink into a static art. As soon as he began to explore painting, he developed a figurative arrangement which involved an almost mathematical character in order that the viewer might be able to form an extrapolation based on space in two dimensions. But this little play of the mind fell far short of satisfying the artist, who wished to permit the perception of a new meaning where «the two awarenesses of forms and space are made by Tactile and Visual perceptions».

With this almost pedagogic concern for the observer understanding by gesture and touch to occur more and more, from 1969 on, to such a point that he presented, in the same year, at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Montreal, an exhibition entitled Jongle Nouilles where the textile-images — «objects to be lived with» — were submitted to all the variations and pressures that man, as much as nature, imposes.

His sculpture-objects, since the end of 1969, are closely linked to the idea of the temporariness, especially due to his discovery of textiles. The latter offer him forms that contrast with those resulting from the use of hard materials: lighter, more pliable, less severe, less aggressive: cotton, plush, velvet, vinyl. The objects begin to transform themselves through their contacts with the surface and their forms are definitively linked to the temporal unfolding that exerts on them an ageing perceptible in the brevity of their existence. He discovered this life peculiar to the object in his family circle through the intervention of his wife, Mónica, who shared from that time in his contacts with the contribution of the materials involved in her own interests: chiefly sewing. From a spectator she became a participant, and, through her knowledge of these fragile materials, gave Cozic the opportunity of setting up a bold demonstration — while it remained aesthetic, visually unique on the importance of external influences on the static nature of fabrics. That was a time of great creation when every object took on an essentially pliable characteristic and when tactile perception acquired an importance little explored before.

On the way toward these objects of consciousness, Cozic developed forms which tended to occupy larger and larger space and which were notably less conventional. This was the time of Complexes mammarie (1970), which took possession of the walls and the floor of the National Gallery of Canada, and of the Chenilles that come from the corners and the ceiling. The whole was directed by the obsession of inviting the viewer to enter the play by modifying the spatial aspect with his own initiative. Cozic was in a period, at the same time of sensuality and non-aggressiveness, when, through the sense of touch, he tried to permit the perception of «the rigidity of the surface and the dynamism of these objects move»: the play then takes on a new meaning where «the two awarenesses of forms and space are made by Tactile and Visual perceptions».

With this almost pedagogic concern for the observer understanding by gesture and touch to occur more and more, from 1969 on, to such a point that he presented, in the same year, at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Montreal, an exhibition entitled Jongle Nouilles where the textile-images — «objects to be lived with» — were submitted to all the variations and pressures that man, as much as nature, imposes.
would whip his body and whose leaves would care to him in a clearly sensual play of nature, the whole increased by a feeling of insecurity added by the mystery of the environment. This proposal of a sensory discovery in itself empowers each of us to enter into this universe of perceptions, according to his own personality, and at the same time to reveal himself while developing anxieties as well as pleasures.

There are henceforth three inseparable factors: the viewer, the object, the creator, linked in movement and in time. And the object exists in so far as the spectator takes upon himself the task of animating it, that is to say, of giving it a soul.

With his Cordes à linge, Cozic explored multimodal relationships: the idea of generality that he had previously begun to dissect. But then, the viewer — by exception — does not become involved and only undergoes the unfolding of these moments. Endowed with gay colours and modified by bad weather, Cozic’s clothes-line permits the eye to follow a whole range of movements that depend on the time function and whose visual perception offers as many snapshots of the real nature of environment as of the possibilities of transformation of everyday materials.

It was perhaps with Les 19 premiers jours de la vie d’Eustache that Cozic wished, in May 1968, to capture in the city of Montreal the synthesis of the whole series of tactile objects that he produced in collaboration with his wife. His plan was to make an object develop and to cause it to invade a space, in this case the one at the gallery. Underlying this was his invitation to the public to come not only once to see a work which it should lose from sight, but to witness, by regular visits, the growth of a work called upon from that time never to disappear. Even if he considered Eustache a gag, he nevertheless structured the act of its creation in three parts: 1) the visual part, with its tactile concern due to the use of plush; 2) the intellectual part of the process of growth arising from a contrast between a lapse of time and the quality of the temporary; 3) the essential part, which is what the viewer can feel upon contact with the object. To this experience we must connect the idea of the ephemeral that he had previously begun to dissect. Cozic participated with the seven other artists of Groupe Média. The idea being to assemble in one big sack about thirty articles: engravings, beach things, inflatable banners, slashed canvases, easily transported at one time and which one unwraps himself to make his choice — therefore occupation of a space.

Cozic has two other important productions to his credit: these are Voir qui sont nus (1973), in which he intended to point in derision at our consumer society in another gratuitous gesture, without commercial aforesight. Among the many variations of different materials, he clothed trees in the dead of winter in order that the viewer might witness the irreparable deterioration of this cheap finery, in the image of all that we produce. In 1973, too, he held an exhibition at the Museum of Contemporary Art in company with Jean Noël, entitled Oeil partagé. The objects he presented chiefly surfaces for touching. Strongly encouraged to participate, the viewer did not deny himself this and was able in this way to do what the artist expected of him.

Such creations, in which the care for the aesthetic disappears progressively to the benefit of the comprehension of the instantaneous, encouraged Cozic to increase his vision of perceptions; he invites us more than ever to make use of our senses, to see better, to touch better. Who knows? One day he will perhaps invite us to hear better, to feel better, and to make better use of the sense of taste by going so far as to taste the sculpture-object. Certainly Cozic is reserving other discoveries for us in the domain of sensory perceptions.

(Translation by Mildred Grand)

Born in France in 1942, Yvon Cozic took the classical course at Stanislas College in Montreal. A graduate of the School of Fine Arts in 1963, he held a bursary from the Canada Arts Council from 1969 to 1972; he also received a grant from the Quebec Ministry of Cultural Affairs in 1969. Several of his works are to be found in the National Gallery of Canada and the Museum of Contemporary Art. Aside from his many exhibitions, solo and group, he is one of the administrators of the Group Média, Gravures et Multiples in Montreal. He is presently producing an exterior sculpture that Quebec is giving to the city of Kingston, on the occasion of the three hundredth anniversary of the founding of that city: a much discussed work whose theme is pollution.

RICHARD CICCIMARRA

By Bradford R. COLLINS

In the summer of last year Richard Ciccimarra, a Victoria artist, died in Greece. It was not an event noted by many; this, in fact, is one of the few places you will find reference to the fact. To me, this seems somewhat tragic in that city: a much dis­neglected. What is nice is to see an artist dealing happily and richly with our finer human instincts, enlarging our capacity for feeling.

Despite the ability of Ciccimarra to deal with his subject-matter in such a consummate fashion, however, makes it apparent that ineptitude cannot account for the particular style adopted in these works. Slowly one becomes conscious of the expressive strength carried by the line. Ciccimarra has willfully rejected a flashy, impressionistic technique which would add to the viewer, without commercial aforethought. The vision of the artist is less one of the opportu­nities, allowing the spectator an escape, but the act does not soothe or settle, does not bridge the distance between the figures; each remains isolated, alone in his own sorrow. The line contributes much to the general impact. It is in its ordinariness, tentative, slow and lifeless. It is in its beauty or excitement. More than anything, it has to do with modern painting. Except for a few notable exceptions like Edward Hopper, modern painting has avoided such themes, only Ciccimarra has emerged from the cloud. In fact, it has contained itself all too often in recent years with formal issues, issues of paint­ing. Rather than face the world, artists like Reg Holmes, whose works followed Ciccimarra’s at the Bau-Xi Gallery, seem to prefer to clothe their work in a tight, cozy confines of an artificial system. Instead, Ciccimarra have addressed themselves to the world beyond their own studios and art books they have tended to do so with a coldly impersonal eye. The Pop artist treats people as commodities and the Photo Realist prefers machines and scenes devoid of a human presence. The painter of William Featherston, another Victoria artist recently shown at the Galerie Allen, falls into this general category. The human element is essential to Featherston’s work, but the characters are hard and impenetrable, strange to each other and to us. I am by no means faults, and the artist is well aware of his personal involvement is not completely atrophied. What is nice is to see an artist dealing warmly and richly with our finer human instincts, enlarging our capacity for feeling.

The theme of loneliness and resignation is one dealt with in the literature of the century (the poetry of T.S. Eliot comes most quickly to mind) and it is in this context that Ciccimarra’s work is modern. It usually has little to do with modern painting. Except for a few notable exceptions like Edward Hopper, modern painting has avoided such themes, only Ciccimarra has emerged from the cloud. In fact, it has contained itself all too often in recent years with formal issues, issues of paint­ing. Rather than face the world, artists like Reg Holmes, whose works followed Ciccimarra’s at the Bau-Xi Gallery, seem to prefer to clothe their work in a tight, cozy confines of an artificial system. Instead, Ciccimarra have addressed themselves to the world beyond their own studios and art books they have tended to do so with a coldly impersonal eye. The Pop artist treats people as commodities and the Photo Realist prefers machines and scenes devoid of a human presence. The painter of William Featherston, another Victoria artist recently shown at the Galerie Allen, falls into this general category. The human element is essential to Featherston’s work, but the characters are hard and impenetrable, strange to each other and to us. I am by no means faults, and the artist is well aware of his personal involvement is not completely atrophied. What is nice is to see an artist dealing warmly and richly with our finer human instincts, enlarging our capacity for feeling.

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The best work in the exhibit was being shown for the first time, it is not surprising he has not been noted. What is sad is that the show will not attract the serious paintings, the ignored, unrecognized. For one thing, humanism is unfortunately passé in art. It is dismissed as anecdotal and sentimental, as if man were not a lover of stories and feeling. Then, too, Ciccimarrà is not part of any “school”. The harsh reality is that quantity counts for more than quality. Recognition goes to the movement, the group. Artists with an entirely individual style are less apt to gain recognition than those whose work is part of a larger current. Edward Hopper’s work received little art historical attention until the recent revival of representational painting, until a historically important niche had been created for his covered. Whether the same happy fate will befall Ciccimarrà’s art. This seems ironically appropriate to an artist who dealt with ultimate mystery.

ERNEST GENDRON, OR THE ART OF SUBSTRUCTURE

By Léo ROSSHANDLER

The Museum of Modern Art in New York presented to us some years ago an exhibition on the theme Architecture without Architects. This showed houses, buildings, even villages and whole towns that were the results of the invention of the inhabitants of the places. We were struck by the beauty of the forms, by the adaptation to the environment, by the efficient use of space, materials and decoration, in short, by the excellence of the solutions found to the problems of housing and the function and shape of the buildings. All this had been accomplished during the course of history without the aid of graduate architects. By all evidence, the communities contained a goodly number of anonymous architects, educated simply in the hardest and truest school, that of experience.

Would it be possible to discover among us an art without artists? Upon visiting The Exhibition of Three Artists, as people are pleased to call it, organized at the Saidye Bronfman Centre, we realize that two of the exhibitors, Tsipora Levy and Abraham Bazak, are truly artists, but that the third, Ernest Gendron, does not seem to deserve this glorious title. In the biographies published at the time of the exhibition, Levy and Bazak told us of the schools they attended, and the prizes won during the course of their careers, and gave us other information tending to justify the rôle of artists about the work of Gendron. No school, no diploma, no prize, simply the abridged story of a life: lumberman, soldier, acrobat, comedian, wrestler, mechanic, handyman. The dichotomy goes even further. If Gendron says he is a gambler, that he is not bound to the rules that govern our lives, he will remain ignorant on the money he receives from life, that he does not have a heart and has associated with thieves, this has gone by unremarked, it does not make an artist. And yet they exhibit paintings from his hand, under sanctioned forms: reviews, articles, in the press, etc.

On the other hand, a great deal of good will is shown toward Gendron. He is known as a primitive painter, a naïve artist, a spontaneous creator, adjectives which are only too many. What ought to be said is that he possesses an extraordinary technique, that he is a marvellous portraitist, that he, with knowledgeable colourist, a poet of the image, a psychologist of modern life, that he speaks a contemporary visual language. Since this is not being said, I am happy to have the opportunity of asserting it here.

The reader has perhaps not been reassured. Gendron, who crossed his sixtieth birthday, does not belong to the SPAQ, or to C.A.R.; he has not been presented in art galleries or in museums. He does not teach anywhere. The Arts Council has not taken an interest in him, the Bank Art has not visited his place of work, the minister of Cultural Affairs of Quebec is reproached for not painting childhood memories like Grandma Moses, the prototype of the so-called naive artist. He is placed in the same category as Arthur Villeneuve; even if Gendron refuses any comparison with his colleague from Chicoutimi who, he says, «is not serious because he does not finish his canvases». By all evidence, Gendron and Villeneuve are not comparable, they follow divergent paths.

What does Gendron paint and how does he paint? His works are the reflection of the ordinary life of every day, particularly of the buff that crosses it. In this case the glory of instant History offered to us by politics, the press, the media: President Kennedy and his group, Pope Pius XII and his canary, René Lévesque and John Diefenbaker, Charles de Gaulle and Churchill, even Hitler is not missing. He is interested also in persons who are not leaders of men: Picasso appears in front of his castle, Olivier Guimond, «the man who makes millions of people laugh», is there with his charming smile and Marilyn Munroe, naked, separated by a deep river from the humanity that would like to convince him that is the image of dreamed-of happiness. There is also the portrait of Charlie Chaplin, a picture Gendron considers his masterpiece.

He made «the only radio of its kind in the world», a shrine of an old set surrounded with paintings produced in the spirit of medieval hunts. Finally he created a collection of pawns and checkers decoration and its colouring are comparable to the most beautiful Persian carpets, which are mentioned here only in the quality of an illustration, Gendron not having been inspired by them at all.

The technique of this painter is of the most uncommon and personal. He uses enamels which he applies with toothpicks or wooden matches. Gendron obtains clear, velvety, often sculptured pictorial coatings. The nose of the general (you recognize him without its being necessary to name him) stands out from the surface of the picture and of the figure and frightened you with its realism. It is a matter of mockery or caricature, much to the contrary. The beautiful flat and polished black of the dress costume that the figure wears contrasts knowledgeably with his face submitted to a movement of volumes accentuating its strength. Fortunately, the force of which I am speaking is entirely in Gendron’s art and not in the face of the subject. In another connection, we have a desire to pinch Olivier Guimond’s cheeks, the texture is so well moulded. Through his patience, his concern for doing well, his gift as an illustrator, his belonging to the family of the monks and artists of the Middle Ages, creators of illustrated manuscripts, of books of the hours which are the glory of museums to-day.

After Villeneuve, Gendron reveals that there is a very rich source of art in the people. But it is only occasionally that art emanating from the suburbs is shown. Some persons are recognized, others are not. People in lessor trades, persons fallen from their class, are taken seriously. The dizzy circus of the art of the twentieth century could have seized upon Gendron and enrolled him in the Pop group which is very healthy in Quebec, thank goodness. But because Gendron escapes every category, all the classifications dear to the priests of art, he demonstrates the limitless possibilities of creation that exist among us and everywhere else. If it is true that all and sundry are not in a position to produce objects of an aesthetic nature, as it is true that not everyone is suited to having a driving licence, it is just as certain that a great number of persons, especially in the social levels apart from the cultured or the official or the avant-garde (a trinity as well installed, but as little certain as the Other), possess the gift of creating. Let them take courage and, with or without official help, let them follow the path traced out by Gendron. It is then that Quebec will have its art without artists. What is valid for Quebec is equally valid for the rest of the world.

François Gagnon did not hesitate to say that Villeneuve was one of the greatest artists in Quebec; let him allow me, while I agree with him, to say the same about Ernest Gendron. And there he is, finally, a connoisseur artist.

(Translation by Mildred Grand)