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ART IMPLIED IN THE BEAUTIFUL AND THE USEFUL

By Andrée PARADIS

To look at implied art is to analyse a form of spontaneous art which results from a combination of circumstantial causes most often non-premeditated. Thus, more and more, the beauty of machines, the severe style of the useful object, the astonishing variety of the graphic image create new and powerful impressions in the receiver or visual consumer capable of appreciating beauty by the simple means of the imagination, without the absolute necessity of having recourse to the criteria of the past. The progressive awakening of a collective awareness of the problem of physical and cultural environment coincides with an implicit recognition of this art matter of course that we find in the prime object of spontaneous art which results from a combination of aesthetic values as incompatible with the advent of an industrial society. Art, at least colour, is taking possession of the public square, is installing itself in the factory, and is invading the localities of public transport. It is evident that the technological revolution entails the collapse of the substructure of traditional culture, but at the same time it gives birth to "a new culture, not learned in school," whose substructure is directly bound to the technological and scientific revolution, and finds its expression in full development creating its models in a new system of the arts: movies, comic strip, design, pop music, architecture (town planning), etc. Besides, it borrows its techniques of thought and its knowledge from the language of the sciences, modern mathematics, physics, biology and sciences of man. 

"(1) What is happening is exactly the opposite of the predictions put forth by dogmatists such as Durkheim and Wilbols, who at the beginning of the century denounced the taste in art and the concern for safeguarding aesthetic values as incompatible with the advent of an industrial society. Art, at least colour, is taking possession of the public square, is installing itself in the factory, and is invading the localities of public transport. It is evident that the technological revolution entails the collapse of the substructure of traditional culture, but at the same time it gives birth to "a new culture, not learned in school," whose substructure is directly bound to the technological and scientific revolution, and finds its expression in full development creating its models in a new system of the arts: movies, comic strip, design, pop music, architecture (town planning), etc. Besides, it borrows its techniques of thought and its knowledge from the language of the sciences, modern mathematics, physics, biology and sciences of man."

"(2) At the side of great artistic experiments which are to be found at the level of forms of thought and which exist by their very nature, it occurs inevitably and by its very nature."
THE BEAUTY OF DESIGN
A COMMERCIAL ASSET?

By Patrick DANAN

Design tends to use the form of the object in a precise aim toward sales; a good presentation sometimes compensates for the poor quality of the product. For instance, a well-designed perfume bottle and its wrapping often attract the eye of the customer at the expense of the product itself. Said in a different way, the beauty of the form, in this case, is a good incentive to sales.

It is clear that, in the present economy, this attitude corresponds effectively to the demand for a market for the object and very often leads to neglecting the ways of using the product only to stop at the form. Today, this attitude corresponds effectively to the different way, the beauty of the form, in this designed perfume bottle and its wrapping.

Functionalism is everything which speaks of design thinks of often leads to neglecting the ways of using the large totality of industrial production; it is becoming a method, a style, a state of mind and above all a new relationship between man and object. The search for an aesthetic is not its sole aim, it is equally engaged in a complex effort of creation with due regard to the facts of assembly implicit in the definition of an industrial product.

The importance of design in our industrial society depends on its ideological, economic and social implications. Thanks to the numerous studies to which it gives rise, it is characterized by efforts tending to humanize modern techniques. On the other hand, its achievements give an aesthetic value to our civilization. Its power of attraction upon the eye, dynamic and constantly renewed, encourages trade of the object on world markets and stimulates export. To raise the level of good taste and the conditions of life of all are among its objectives. Design can play a positive rôle in economic life. It is, however, necessary for it to define constantly reasonable policies which answer the needs of the society in which we live, capitalist or socialist, but firmly industrial.

Another important function of design: to offer to the consumer the final opportunity to create his own environment, and to be able to make personal choices. That having been said, the design which attained professional height at the time of the Bauhaus, does not succeed nowadays in keeping alive the sense of research which had distinguished it at its birth; with this exception; if you wish, concerning Italy, where activity in this area is intense and puts Italian design in the foremost places of the avant-garde, as the Bauhaus was itself in the time of the neoplastics of Mies van der Rohe. However, we continue to be impressed by the present achievements which are seen in official exhibitions, where three-quarters of the objects show affiliation with Jacobson, Eames, Mies van der Rohe, Breuer or Le Corbusier. Nothing less is needed than a Joe Colombo, an Ollivier Mourgue or a Pierre Paolin to break the routine and the established forms, although the true revolutionary formulas concern chiefly the treatment of new materials (this is seen in the expansion of polyurethane foam with Gaetano Pesce or again in the inflatable structures of Guiser). If, for many years, a seat of Le Corbusier, Breuer or Mies van der Rohe has identified its author as clearly as a canvas of Picasso, design today touches a public much greater and is becoming more and more the sign of an emancipation achieved under the sponsorship of progressive manufacturers.

Through ruptures which engender mutations, Pierre Francastel has written, human societies have as their chief function the creation of things. More than any other, without doubt, forward-moving industrial society has its place under the sign of the object. Expression of a civilization, it is today at the heart of a culture. It vivifies the economy, which bases its capacity on its systematic development and its universal suitability. The conjunction of a technique and an aesthetic which has been brought to bear on the most extraordinarily rapid objects and the general transformation of all the materials in the environment of the activities of man, are disrupting utilitarian furniture and showing affiliation with today's demand for consumerism.

In each big city there is a market for these things. We have one in Montreal, which distributes the creations of our designers as well as those of foreign ones, and I am pleased to offer a few of these objects, not necessarily foreign and current, and sharing in the standardization which eliminates differences. Identical objects, while being logical and aesthetic, are to be found in some of our shops: Focus; Pour l'Instant; Deux fois Trois. (Translation by Mildred GRAND)

Do you know that in 1970 the sales of Quebec furniture reached 286 million dollars, of which more than a third, 115 million, represents the amount of sales in other provinces of Canada? Here is a real economic potential. But in spite of these figures, the greater part of design remains poor in Quebec.

Although for about twenty years a few creators and a few institutions have sought to give an impetus to design, the delay has been considerable. In 1956 and 1957, the index published by the National Council of Design showed among the worth-while products, only a few objects made in Quebec. After the war, the consumers who wanted furniture conforming to the standards of good design had no other recourse than to buy furniture imported from Scandinavia or the United States. For thirty years Knoll and Herman Miller therefore placed on the international market the creations of pioneers of design which have become classics: Breuer’s chair, Mies van der Rohe’s Barcelona, Bertoia’s plasticized wire-mesh armchair.

Here, experiments were for a long time rudimentary. In 1951, a garden chaise longue by Julien Hébert was brought out. A collection of furniture, Opus, a few lines of Jacques Guillon went beyond small production with difficulty.

The sixties brought about a certain freeing of attitude, and Expo ’67 proved to Quebeckers that one could have confidence in design, that contemporary can be synonymous with stimulating, with warm. For once, and for the first time, at Expo, an innovation (except for a few very rare foreign pavilions) was placed within reach of the public which knew how to appreciate it.

With this impetus, manufacturers called more and more on designers, among whom were graduates of L’Ecole du Meuble, which had become l’Institut des Arts Appliqués and since then the department of Interior Furnishing and Design of the CEGEP of Old Montreal. The University of Montreal and the University of Quebec have just initiated courses in
design. With regard to furniture, Quebec is trying to harmonize with international production, and matters are in the process of changing, but still timidly.

In collaboration with the Association of Manufacturers of Quebec, the provincial government is presenting, in 1972, a collection of new furniture which raises general production on the whole, but some of these creations just make the grade, and only a few reveal a real potential of creativity.

Finally, we realize that profit and aesthetics can be closely allied. The Tukkel salt-and-pepper set designed by Marcel Girard and J. P. Lacoste and sold everywhere in the United States and Canada, is proof of this; as is the series Century II, designed by André Jarry, Girard, Bruce et Associés and produced by the Simmons Company of Montreal, whose success as much in the United States as in Canada is so great that delays of delivery spread over several months. An evolution is taking place which deserves to be intensified.

Some mistakes could be corrected. We know that it is only through being forced by the difficulties of the industry that the Quebec government has become interested in Quebec furniture. Prejudices still exist. Would it be otherwise today for the furnishing of Quebec House in Paris, which was entrusted a few years ago to a Parisian Interior decorating firm of the rue Saint-Honoré, which made sure to use so-called Chipendale and Louis XVI furniture in the 20th century version? (M. Pompidou entrusts the interior decoration of l'Elysée to the designer Pierre Paulin?)

Very often, the equipping and the furnishing of Quebec government buildings are planned by architects, while the government finances institutes of learning to train designers who then remain unemployed.

What shall we say of the policy of the federal government which, recently, at the exposition in Hickory, North Carolina, financed an exhibition mostly of period furniture at a time when, incidently, it was subsidizing quality design at great cost and paying for research, plans, designs, prototypes carried on by industries and their designers' offices. The incoherence of this attitude maintains confusion among the manufacturers, the vendors and the consumers at the same time.

A. Object created — intended to be beautiful (creator); — seen without concern for beauty (user);
B. Object created — intended to be beautiful; — seen as beautiful;
C. Object created — intended to be beautiful; — seen as not beautiful;
D. Object created — made without concern for beauty; — observed without concern for beauty;
E. Object created — made without concern for beauty; — seen as beautiful;
F. Object created — made without concern for beauty; — seen as not beautiful.

Examples:
Gothic art — in its own era: case B in the 17th century; case C in modern times: case B

Kitel art — cases A, B, C and E all possible, at the same time, in different classes of society; and all possible diachronically in the same person.

In schools, it is sometimes the relationship between the object created and its creator which prevails (conceptual art), sometimes the relationship between the object created and the user. For my part, I prefer to regard as a true object d'art only that which can be classified in case B.

As to the word "graphic" used very often with "graphism" to denote many different things, I must suppose that it names a quality common to all these things. To identify this quality more accurately, we can try to distinguish it. A dead tree cannot be graphic art, but its photograph can. A water-colour, on the other hand, can be graphic art. Line seems therefore to define "graphic". At the sight of bare trees, I am obliged to admit that, even if I feel a graphic effect, I cannot say that art is involved.

The art of design, if one limits oneself to etymology, is an art of writing, or rather an art whose goal is the whole of the visual symbols of language. It is the art of the conception and the lay-out of these signs. It is obvious that this lay-out depends at the same time, on the function of the sign, and on the choice of means of expression. It is both a system of signs. The intention therefore affects the meaning of the sign as well as the sign itself, in its composition.

One does not write "Woolworth" or "Vie des Arts" for nothing. One writes them to name them visually, to distinguish them, and if one wishes to beautify the sign, it is precisely in order to make of that sign a brand, a means of characterization, of distinction. "Bread" or "bakery" are not enough to show the difference between the shop of a baker and that of a baker of cleaner, unless for those who have learned to decipher the coded language of this message. Imagine a street where all the stores, completely similar, had for their only entrance a door with an inscription in Arabic or in Chinese to indicate their specialties, thus would arise the necessity of

Rather than limit the historical development of graphic art and posters to a dating of their works, we shall offer a continuum of graphic works, although operations developed at different times can exist at the same time. First let us define the expression "graphic art" and perhaps at the same time its two components.

First, art.

We cannot classify in the category "objet d'art" (meaning an object in the larger sense as opposed to a subject) all that we find beautiful. A stone or a tree are objet d'art only to the extent that they have been created or modified by the human will. Art is a conscious creation, ideologically undertaken. One does not create art as Monsieur Jourdain wrote prose. Whatever may be one's idea of beauty, an object of art is only a thing in relation to a subject which creates it or regards it as a work of art, otherwise it is only a thing. It is in this way that "kitsch" works are works of art, being intended to be beautiful by their creators and seen as beautiful by their users. It is possible that the idea of beauty which was present at the birth of an object of art and the idea of beauty which is present at its rebirth as object of art for the user (here we understand "user" in the larger sense which also means spectator) may not be the same, which makes of art a state not of nature, but of culture, a world of the mind and as if at a different time.

From the point of view of structure, there can be among the three terms: creator, object created and user, all the following connections:
today's poster, like that of yesterday, fulfills the function of the poster, although the result is a visual form. And so it soon becomes necessary to add to the elements which inform, elements which suggest in order to influence the purpose of the consumer toward a predetermined direction, to make him buy, to make him choose, to make him judge, to create an opinion in him, even to awaken him to a new awareness. For this purpose, it is necessary to make the sign more attractive, more beautiful, to colour it, to decorate it, to make it correspond to the idea which the consumer has of the meaning of the sign. If necessary to agree to destroy the meaning of the sign if this destruction creates a new meaning in accordance with the idea of the meaning, which occurred or was caused in the mind of the user of the sign.

In our type of society, it is necessary to identify several sub-groups of users. Creators, who make use of the characters created by others in new creations of signs: the innovators of creation, clients of the maker, who have the sign made according to the idea which the maker or the Innovator has of the final meaning — that is, the meaning which the sign will have for the consumer, the third sub-group of user.

The success of a sign depends on its effectiveness, on the degree to which it transmits its message and this adequacy is independent of any preestablished rule of aesthetics; however, the clarity and the immediate comprehension of the sign are an assurance of success to the extent to which the visual effect produced by this sign succeeds in crossing the threshold of our indifference. Since the demands for our attention become more numerous and more varied every day, the impact of the sign must be stronger and stronger. It is the art of graphic creators to work not with forms but with meanings, although the result is a visual form.

If the function of graphic art is to communicate, the function of the poster, although it uses similar graphic techniques, is very different. Just as the bas-reliefs created ancient myths, frescoes and stained-glass windows, Roman or Gothic myths, the poster records for us contemporary life in an everyday fashion not real but mythical. From the dancers of the Moulin-Rouge and the first song-writers, posters tell us no longer sacred myths but secular ones. Paradise has changed. Great voyages have replaced the great voyage. Cassandra used to make legends of ocean liners and trains; today Milton Glaser makes a myth of the trip (take a trip to lotus land). Today's poster, like that of yesterday, fulfills its task of mythifying, which is to create an escape while allowing us to see the realization of a dream. It induces the escape of sleep in order better to subdue us. The comfort of a dream, the freshness of a dream, the fragrance of a dream, and even the amazingly new poster, the happy tomorrows of the necessary bad dream — it all happens in another world, parallel to reality.

We have often emphasized either the informative character of the poster or its debasing trait, often by confusing the advertising poster and the sign. The advertising poster is only a historic form of the sign; the poster in itself is proof enough that the poster can exist alone, for its sole function as a myth. It is only because conviction prefers to take on unawakened people that advertising uses the mythical function of the poster. It is easier to sell a dream of purity than a soap powder. Fluttering wash, misty as the veils of an Ophelia in clear lustrous water, held in this same floating like symbols of grace, this wash sells a dream and not a product which tries to join, to associate itself and substitute itself for a dream, to identify itself with the same dream.

(Translation by Mildred Grand)

THE AESTHETICS OF THE COMIC STRIP,
OR THE CONFESSIONS OF A
BUBBLE EATER...

By Georges RABY

A product of our civilization of the picture, the comic strip appeals by the same standard as the movies to people of all ages, of all walks of life. These stories in pictures now enchant almost everyone, and those who, twenty or thirty years ago, tried to prohibit them or to censure them, even partially, giving as excuse the harm which they caused to children, are dead along with their futile attempt. On the contrary, their attempts at destruction gave to the comic strip an increase of publicity, raised the number of their defenders and brought about new studies of the matter; these attempts definitely contributed to placing the comic strip in the rank of 9th art.

These stories often recount the joys and the sorrows of people who are a little ingenuous, who resemble us much more than we
believe at first. Some comic strips are sagas, adventures, odysseys through time and space. Science-fiction has found its home in the strip its most skilful medium. It is the art par excellence for translating a dream and for speaking the language of the imagination. No trickery is necessary; futuristic settings, magic places, everything is possible; monsters, mad scientists or people from other galaxies appear in the pictures of comic strips with a disarming naturalness. The comic strip is first the medium of the amazing!

This popular art touches and sensitizes, almost in spite of themselves, hundreds of millions of readers of newspapers, to the techniques of drawing, to dynamic outline, to different styles of picturing scenery, towns, animals and men. This instruction of the art of drawing goes on daily. On the week-end, these pictures are in colour. It is the museum of the masses, who very seldom go to museums!

One wonders if the readers realize the aesthetic quality of these pictures, of their dreamy message, of their undoubted value as witnesses or mirrors of life. Who events? Of course, of Pariah! But, it matters little after all. On ageing, works of importance acquire, like a good wine, their true dimension in the eyes of people long after their fulfillment. And they even give a taste for them to those who did not have it a few years before.

When we think of this art, it is taught in the universities; among others, at the University of Quebec in Montreal and at the Sorbonne. Many movie-makers are influenced by it: Fellini, Resnais, ... Writers and sociologists carry on studies in depth of this art: Raymond Queneau, Edgar Morin, Evelyne Sylvestre. Among the best-known of these strips, let us mention the "Adventures of Bécassine", "Le Sapeur Camembert" 1890-1896; "Le Semic strips: of which the best-known, even among the universities; among others, at the University of Quebec in Montreal and at the Sorbonne.

Burne Hogarth drew "Tarzan" after Harold Foster, who began it in 1931, from 1937 to 1948 and from 1947 to 1980. When he was the artist of "Tarzan", according to some, he had to imitate Foster for a few months. But Tarzan soon stopped being a semi-god, sure of himself and too calm in the most dangerous fights, to become a man threatened by death, like all men. His mind and his body fought for his life. He stroked across furious seas, froze up in the most dangerous fights, with a primitive, his arms, struggled against a thousand dangers, without knowing how he would come out of it safe and sound.

From King of the jungle, as he was in the drawings of Foster, Tarzan became a high-strung wild beast that, as Foster put it, "never loses a mind and a body strained to face danger". The style of drawing also changed radically with Burne Hogarth. "Tarzan" became dramatic to the greatest possible extent. The written part of the picture became forceful through the use of the language of the movies. Foster used a mind and a body strained to face danger. The expression of muscular tension or relaxation; ready to spring, hidden in a tree, swinging by a rope of vines toward an enemy to be cut down or a friend to be saved. He was always moving or about to move with Hogarth ... Tarzan was drawn from the back, in profile, front-face. In the thousand positions of a man whose unceasing movement reveals a human anxiety never extinguished. The reader could identify his secret conflicts with no trouble. Tarzan was the man of all anxieties.

To express this anguish of man, Hogarth developed an aggressive technique, characterized by the impact of his master Michaud, and on his drawing-board subjugated the strength of the setting to the force of the drama. Trees, sky, sea, rocks, all tended to strengthen the attitudes of the hero. It is enough to look at one picture of Tarzan to understand the harmony between man and setting in the drawings of Hogarth.

Also, the authors of epic comic strips often worked from nature. Foster, after his "Tarzan", created "Prince Valiant". The magnificent forests of his pictures were drawn from sketches of the Canadian north. Alex Raymond, the author of "Flash Gordon", used to give to his hero expressions which he drew from reality. And what can one say of the monstrous animals of the planet Mongo, of giant trees which hide whole cities in their foliage?

To read the normal ways of reading a comic strip, it is interesting, for instance, to follow the evolution of the characters during the course of years. One notices, then, that during wars, heroes become chauvinistic or racist. The morals of these characters evolve with those of society or often go ahead of them. In several comic strips, we see that the role...
of woman has changed greatly. At the begin-
ning, she was a thoughtless companion who
often attracted the enemy and fell into a
thousand traps. The hero rescued her and
received the usual kisses after having saved
her. With the movement toward the liberation
of women, the heroines abandoned their pas-
sive role of sensual woman to share in deci-
sions. And instead of still being victims, they
became helpers. More, forceful heroines today
are very popular in a certain kind of erotic
comic strip, such as "Barbarella", "Scarlet
Dream", "Pravda", "Valentina", etc, which
often picture the man in the role that was
formerly theirs, but with a touch of humour,
since it is still men who draw and invent
these female characters.

There is no need to read stories of comic
strips to feel their influence today. Advertising
has taken possession of these characters to
advertise a current product with the offhand-
kindness of a television comedian. Stories in
pictures are also used in the advertising pages
of newspapers. A friend, on opening a box
containing a beauty product, found a folder
illustrated like a comic strip which explained
the instructions in detail. Even in the subway
the comic strip is shown to the passengers in
a certain tunnel whose wall is painted in
spaced pictures. The speed of the subway
brings them to life. But in that case we are
involved with the comic strip and with ani-
malized cartoons.

In Quebec, it is well known, the comic
strips created by our artists find little place
in our newspapers. We prefer imports to
originals. And yet, we have prestigious names:
Marc-Antoine Nadeau, Michel Fortier, André
Montpetit, Noël Cormier, Raymond Dupuis,
André Phillibert, Tibo, Nimus, Bernèche, all
those who work for magazines of irregular
circulation: "B.D.", "Made in Quebec", "L'Hy-
drocalphale",... Many of these authors are
painters, engravers, illustrators who express
themselves in the comic strip with the same
enthusiasm and the same talent as in their
canvas.

Sometimes the magazine "Perspectives"
publishes the works of Montpetit. They should
be preserved. His drawing is as vibrant as a
flame, his peoples are caricatured with a
strong touch of sadism and his stories, often
written by Claude Haefely, seem to be a
delirium of the imagination.

Why does one prefer to tell stories rather
than paint pictures in this environment? After
all, some say that the comic strip is a minor
art in relationship to painting. Why? Actually,
only what is badly done is minor. Others
longer think that to create or to read comic strips
all one's life betrays a juvenile mind. Why
not? Perhaps the readers of these stories in
pictures have caught the virus of retardation
— the refusal to assume the responsibility of
the hardened adult characters of the race in
order to develop only juvenile characters. In
this case, it would be a good trait to read
comic strips, and not a defect. It would be
the first quality, even, of our civilization of
pictures and leisure.

It was a character in "Paulilet", a strip
of Wolinski and Pichard, who said ironically
when looking at demonstraters: "The young
are becoming older and older, this year." And
the other policeman answered in the same
mood: "In my opinion, anybody who does not
have the legion of honour is young. I wallow
them."

There it is — the young are ageing without
becoming old, thanks to the comic strip.

(Translation by Mildred Grand)
The genius of man had imagined and fulfilled them presented a specific appearance which transports, etc., but very quickly, they realized rapidly and safely, efficient links with surface characteristics of this transport system: first subway only to emphasizing the technological character, strictly functional order, and, why not, the diversification of talents, the going beyond possibilities of the invention of new urban future.

surface of the city. A true third dimension of subway was not only a technologial wonder.

by these conditions, architects Louis-J. Papineau, above all. makes of it an urban and cosmopolitan place. station receives a great number of crowds. most important intersection in Montreal, this by the architecture of the subway. Situated in the chief on account of the lack of height rock while the others were built in open corridors, the mezzanine was essentially an urban area. A great number of stations were dug into the earth, A series of beams and columns. These columns are circular patterns of from six to twelve feet in diameter, whose surfaces are covered with rectangular tiles. These ceramics present coloured movements. Great care has been taken in their location, Attention was paid to the progress of the subway rider and of his movement toward, or in the central part, of the station.

We realize that these motifs make use with accuracy of form, colour and texture to break with their background. They impose a new architecture on the corridors, which are generally dreary and restricting passages. Through this reconstruction of space, they contrived to make the limited dimensions of the corridors expressively useful. "Many architects", he says, "still build for a long time in carelessness or in narrow place for aesthetic considerations. It demonstrates that art, in situations where form, colour and light are involved. After all, it is his special field." For Mousseau, all is an affair of conscience. The perception of the environment is in the end the only true project of contemporary art. The artist can work on form or on appearance, he can colour matches, throw stones at casters, build public places, all these projects can only aim at reconciling man and his environment.

The area of the Peel station is productive in certain ways. It demonstrates that art, without taking the place of life, can seem of no significance. It was one of the illustrous forcibly the possibilities of architecture, with regard to that new knowledge of the problems posed to humanity by a technical universe, but for a long time in carelessness or in enthusiasm. The creators have proved that it is possible to live from architecture in efficiency while never confusing the two ideas. We find the same control in the progress of other remarkable projects which they have undertaken in Montreal, such as the girls' residence at the University of Montreal and the Quebec pavilion at Man and His World.

"We no longer question life in the laboratory", states François Jacob (4). And yet, a scientific attitude too much emphasized risks compromising the quality of spaces planned by town-planning specialists. This contributes most often to depriving the architect of his space to the benefit of the arrangement. This reconquest of space by architecture is, doubtless, one of the roads which will lead to the harmony lost between man and his environment. There is great evidence from those who have remembered the necessary functions of architecture. Thus, H. Sivadon writes that: "The humanization of our civilization develops through the relationship between child, architecture and space." (6) What Sivadon shares goes beyond the scope of this article. However, it is sometimes well to remember that the possession of space is also part of happiness. That is why cities, as Michel Régnier notes in the series "Urbanisme" which he created for the NFB are the major problem of our civilization. Daily life in Montreal also takes in run-down areas, dappled dwellings, inaccessible shores, difficult social conflicts .... and what meaning can we give to dwelling today? The subway has made us foresee what the city of the twentieth century can be.

The exhibition, "Montreal, plus or minus", created in June at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, reminds us that this does not exist yet and that it will be necessary to build it with the men who will inhabit it. We shall not find a model for it anywhere. It is here that it will have to be invented. (Translation by Mildred Grand)
THE FACTORY

By Didier GILLON

The factory, a place of work shut and closed in upon itself, offers a real challenge to the creators of the environment where the worker spends the greater part of his time and, often, of his existence. In the factory, especially, we find ourselves torn from our fundamental feeling of existence which is that of a womb, an unforgettable place where we have been conceived. Bachelard reminds us in this connection that this feeling is rooted in the home, a space chosen by us, around us, closed enough so that conscience finds itself there, open enough within and without, in order that it may be, in action, consciousness of the world. He thus expresses a vital and viable need which the creators of environment must answer, not only in dwellings, but in all areas. Whether one is a town-planner, an architect, an engineer, a designer, a psychologist or an artist, the challenge of the factory, particularly, is located in all levels, because the bases of the problem are existential, certainly, but also social, economic, ideological and cultural, bases in movement and often incoherent.

Some attempts have been initiated, less to attack the causes of the problem than to improve the results. This contradictory step has nonetheless in special circumstances, turned certain manufacturers toward an attempt to humanize the place of work. To this purpose, what is more enticing than to introduce art, to humanize the place of work. To this purpose, what is more enticing than to introduce art, worked on the setting up of the offices and warehouses of Vermont Construction, contractors. Here, the artist received the whole of the interior and exterior of the building as background for his work and shaped it as he wished. From this there resulted such a modification in the architectural scale that the latter lost its identity and only the painted work remains. We are far from a merging of the arts. At the interior, however, the integration seems more real. The participation of the artist is less evident when the architecture takes the upper hand. We are, in fact, in the presence of a compromise between two arts rather than that of a coherent work. On the other hand, the effects on the employees are partial and occasional, since they are felt principally upon their arrival and their departure.

But art in a factory ought to be really integrated; that is, implicit in all levels, rather than being as added in a random manner here or there. It would perhaps be well to recall part of the program of the Bauhaus at Weimar. The ultimate aim of all visual arts is the achievement of a building in its entirety. To beautify buildings was formerly the very noble function of fine arts. They were the indispensable links, the diversions, of the highest sense of the term. To-day, the arts are isolated and this situation can be corrected only by conscious effort and the cooperation of all craftsmen. Architects, painters and sculptors must learn again to grasp the composite character of a building and to see it as a whole, as a unity throughout the aspect of its different component parts. It is only then that their work will be permeated by this architected spirit. Few achievements of our time can boast of having fulfilled this ideal formulated by Walter Gropius in 1919. And yet, it is in a factory at Varennes, fifteen miles from Montreal, that art finds here this artistic unity which embraces architecture, painting and sculpture.

The new ASEA factory employs 275 people, of whom the majority are specialized workers and technicians. It produces transformers which could weigh 660 metric tons and have up to 1,500,000 volt re-actances destined for high tension transmission lines. It is therefore a factory for heavy industry with coils, motors, generators, rolling bridges, cranes, cables, pipes, mains of all kinds, material for handling heavy parts protected by air conditioning and machinery in which danger is present as to potential, but which can be eliminated by conscious effort.

The building, planned by engineers, is strictly functional and the placing according to plan of the machines and the assembling chains determined the surroundings. It fulfilled its function of exterior. On the inside, however, without being as good as Mies van der Rohe's work, the steel structure is conspicuous and marked and we take notice of architectural influence. On the other hand, the forms, volumes and spaces created by the machinery constitute an impressive sculptural work.

Painting, however, has here a prominent role. It creates a link between architecture and sculpture and truly gives them life. Without it, there would be only disparate elements in the factory as he would explore a sculpture and movement in the factory. As man explores the factory, he finds himself, owing to this environment which will become necessary for the daily well-being of all.

More than a solution to the many challenges which the factory and its workers offer, the aesthetic and functional results shown in this ASEA factory at Varennes still offer an effective remedy of the problem. But, above all, they allow us to foresee, in a clear and concrete way, a form of the work of art of tomorrow. Indeed, it is defined more and more as an omnipresence of artistic stimuli involved in the environment which will become necessary to the daily well-being of all.

It is, however, fitting to emphasize that the combination which this form of the total work offers does not have the meaning usually attributed to it. It presupposes the systematic integration of several sciences and arts which creates a nucleus of understanding, not an external process, during the conception of the work. The education of architects and that of the friends of fine arts must be changed in this direction. This new venture should be thrilling.

(Translation by Mildred Grand)
Nature has developed systems and structures which are incomparably more advanced and more complex than what human beings have been able to conceive or construct. Creative imagination has a great importance in design, and nature, in certain cases, constitutes a source of inspiration. If the designer studied relationships, systems and structures of living beings, new horizons would open, yet without sinking into analogies between forms, as in Art Nouveau which approaches new technologies, in particular those of iron, with new forms imitating nature. We have been able to conceive or construct. Buffon observed the same phenomenon, but in another way: "Fill a vessel with peas, or rather with some other cylindrical seed and close it well after having poured in as much water as the spaces which remain between the seeds can hold: boil the mixture; all these cylinders will become columns with six faces. In this we see the reason which is purely mechanical. Each seed whose shape is cylindrical tends in swelling to occupy the greatest possible space within a given space. They necessarily, therefore, all become hexagonal through mutual compression..." (11)

I have observed the silks of Chaetoceros, which are marine planktons or phytoplanktons, belonging to the class of diatoms. The Chaetoceros have cells which carry, at each end, a pair of long fibers joined to those of the neighboring cells to form chains of different lengths (2). The internal structure of these fibers is similar to the "Airmat" structure put on the market by the Goodyear Company. It is composed of two walls, joined by ropes spun during the weaving and maintained by a constant internal air pressure. The ropes, sometimes very close together (from 30 to 60 to the square inch), are of synthetic or natural fiber. (fig. 5)

The advantage of this new process is that it permits the manufacture of structures which are very light while being at the same time very strong. The applications of this principle are varied: inflatable airplanes, bridges, radar, and others. (fig. 5 and 6)

We can note that by sometimes microscopic degrees we find natural structures which have been developed by man and difficult to reproduce. The first work is dated 1959, and its presence is important, as it could appear to be representative of a number of later paintings, and in fact it is an important work which we pretend to respect. (This is confirmed by the way Bloore works, painting a picture, forgetting it, and finding and taking it up again months later.)

This first picture is three-dimensional. Its composition shows a tendency towards a simple geometry, with a play of diagonals which are intersected by horizontal lines. This elementary structure is contradicted or rather complicated by the fairly thick relief of the texture, which plays an important role. Lastly, the work is entirely monochromatic, although more cream than white. The principal difference between it and more recent works is the thickness and the informal character of the relief.

The following work is also from 1959 and related to the first, as it is based on a system of vertical strips and has recourse to a clear relief. But it plays more obviously on the form of its frame, a square placed on its tip, and on color — thick layers of cream color on a gray and black background. The painting reminds one of Bissière. What is interesting is that the density of the cream
The two following pictures, from 1971, mark both a climax of the preceding researches and a new point of departure. The first combines the horizontal lines and the 'thistle' or star motif. Its composition (in the lower part of the work the horizontal lines break off and are organised in two columns) represents a human figure, suggesting that the motif as representing two spoked wheels. Bloore himself jokes about this and states that they are breasts. (Similarly, at the Jerrold Morris Gallery, two triangular paintings with the sun motif are placed with the tip pointing upwards, which calls to mind 'glorification' of female sex according to Bloore, and the tip of the triangles should be turned downwards.) To our mind, the image which the motif immediately evokes is not that of a wheel — although the radiant element is undeniable — but two sea-urchin fossils. They stand out on the white background thanks both to their color and to the slight relief. By implication the shape is spheric and brings into play centrally-projected rays and the concentric lines which contradict the direction of these rays. An additional dimension of the picture, if one looks at it from an angle, is provided by the white frame. The whole is bathed in light, the other two halves being full of shadow. Naturally, the play of reflections will be inverted if one looks at the painting from the opposite angle. Thanks then to the succession of different views of the two 'sea-urchins', we have here a kinetic element which makes them spin. Seen from close up, these highly geometric sea-urchins have an organic quality which is heightened by the puffiness of the relief. In the fourth painting (Collection Mr. and Mrs. Percy Waxter), a single large 'sea-urchin' stands out against a dark emerald green background encircled by the cream frame. The composition is such that the sea-urchin is not exactly in the center, it is closer to the left margin. In the same way, its center, from which the straight lines radiate, is shifted towards the left: hence, an impression of movement which makes itself felt.

Our title of 'sea-urchins' for this series did not displease Bloore, who told us that in December 1971, while on a holiday in Barbados, he had been much intrigued by the sea-urchins he saw, white and not, as is usual, black. He is especially keen on drawings combining the sea-urchin motif with that, previously used, of the meshes of fishing nets. Some day these sketches may serve as a basis for full-sized pictures.

Less convincing in our opinion is the fifth picture, from 1960-61, a large rectangle. Bloore himself jokes about this and claims that the white background give the impression of a microscopic view or description of the structure of a composite rock such as granite. With No. 6 on the other hand, we have one of the other summits of Bloore's art: the famous painting formerly entitled Byzantium (1961, collection Mr. and Mrs. Michael Taylor). 'Formerly' since this is the title given it in, for example, Jerrold Morris's little book On the Enjoyment of Modern Art (1), but today Bloore has decided to suppress this title which was moreover not given by Bloore himself. Byzantium is the last work of Bloore's to be composed of colors as luminous indeed. A cross, ochre (like the preceding paintings), stands out against an orange-tinted background which is subtly dotted with green. In a sense, this cross is composed of elements comparable to those of the sea-urchin: the rectangular bars of the cross, the circle surrounding the cross. We have then here a formal islet-motif. It is in fact a celtic cross fragment, certainly also a solar wheel, whilst the term spoked wheel seems appropriate too. This wheel bursts because it is subject to opposite tensions, it is most convincing by itself, it more resembles a burning bush than a wheel turning in a definite direction.

We enter another world with the next two paintings (1965-72), which constitute a most remarkable whole. Two triangles face each other like two wedges. It is the first work (a trip to Greece and Egypt) which inspired a series of paintings combining the sea-urchin motif with microscopic view or description of the structure of sea-urchin fossils. They stand out on the white background giving the impression of a field of thistles and once again, this 'thistle' outline an abstract center. For him the whites he uses constitute a gamut which includes blues as well as yellows (bluish gray, cream). The relief of the two triangular paintings includes in particular a network of rods making up stars, triangles, polygons (penta, hexagonal, etc.). Irregular as these rods form the points of a star, they seem to mind the sea-urchin motif, and, even more important, they are arranged around a circular center which is nevertheless hollow, empty. Their 'bacteria' appearance on the other hand reminds us of the ambiguity of Bloore's motifs, geometric and organic, at the same time. Finally, this painting also recalls the details of certain decorations (of McKintosh for example), a comparison to which we shall return.

We come then to a painting of 1968 where the density and the economy of his work has become very subtle: like the lines traced by a seismograph, it is a relief which is very slightly brought out, and this type of painting has called forth well-known commentaries on its similarity to various forms of oriental art, especially Egyptian. Bloore himself jokes about this and states that the density and the economy of his work has brought to light. It is also the whole in which the play on different shades of white, gray, bluish gray and cream -...
the return to geometry, to monochromatism, to the line, even to the temptation of the 'tabula rasa', to the a-historical look: a reaction which seems to characterize Bloore's paintings as it characterizes Boullée's and Ledoux's architecture, Flaxman's drawings, etc.

Seen in this way, the relationship of the organic and the mechanical is of great significance in Bloore's work. Paradoxically, his geometric tendency, his abstraction evoke images of growth: crystals, sea-urchins, bacteria... One drawing in particular, composed of indented triangles, also constitutes an emblem of thorns. Certainly, they are elementary shapes, but they are vital ones and they correspond very well to the concept of a tabula rasa. It is in no way 'pure' geometric abstraction or Mondrian's Calvinism, but an intimation of growth, of a germination and efflorescence. The balance here is of course a delicate one, because for Bloor, Art Nouveau, for example, is, with the exception of Mackintosh, far too organic, not sufficiently abstract. Flowers of hoarfrost: the way in which Bloore slowly paints his pictures layer after layer, giving them the final subtle enameled glass, is a crystallization. The motif of congelations can be taken very literally (Ledoux, the Royal Salt-mines of Arc-et-Senans, which points forward to Bloore's 'icicles' (1970-71). Or again, if one examines the technique of Bloore's drawings (going across the page from one side to the other, he repeated a similar motif, but gradually lightened the color of the ink by adding a drop of water), one becomes aware of the very precise resemblance to Flaxman, who rejects Baroque illusionism almost totally in his drawings, any effect of perspective which is not created by the nearly imperceptible entanglement of thorns. Certainly, they are delicate one, because for Bloor, Art


KURT KRANZ

By John David FARMER

Cinema may perhaps be the art form of this century, as asserted in some quarters, but it does not seem in any way to have relegated older art forms to obsolescence. Many of us still appreciate good drawing (despite those who would put down mere "good draughtsmanship", such a commodity is not all that common), witty pictorial ideas, the chance to look at a work at some leisure and be rewarded, and the nice, complex interplay that comes off when an artist really knows about color and form and has good ideas all at the same time. Pop culture is fun and often stimulating, but there really is a visual reward to be had from inspiration wedded to a sense of the classical formal values — in other words, there still can be great art in the textbook, art historical sense of the phrase.

Or taking one of the important ideas in the evolution of modern art is the influence kinetic arts have had on the conventional art forms. The relationship is not always an easy one to fathom and often defies straightforward art historical research. We now know, for instance, that Laszlo Moholy-Nagy's Light-Space Modulator, was not begun as early as 1922 but probably only a short time before its initial exhibition in 1930; this, however, begs the question of its place in a complex matrix of image and reality. Even when operating at full efficiency (Moholy was less an engineer than a visualizer), the Modulator's lines (which run very long at a time without some expert technical assistance), its movement does not and add appreciably to its impact as a work of art. One can assume that Moholy was influenced in some ways by the cinema — particularly the abstract cinema — in his conceptual approach to representation of this work, and it is interesting that he probably only fully approached his ideas when he in turn was able to make the famous film of the Modulator in action: in shadow, in silhouette, half seen, upside down. In the film it is intriguing if frustrating, since one now sees the object; now it sits like a work of art on display, not as the artist intended but a beautiful object, nevertheless.

Kurt Kranz, the subject of a retrospective exhibition which will be seen at several museums in Canada and the United States, not coincidentally evolved from much the same milieu that produced such early experiments in kineticism as the Light-Space Modulator, although his fundamental approach could not be more different than Moholy's. Kranz, now a professor at the Hochschule für bildende Künste, Hamburg, enrolled at the Bauhaus Dessau in 1930; number 20. A number of the original members of Walter Gropius' superb faculty had already left, including Gropius himself, but Kranz's teachers included Paul Klee, Wassily Kandinsky, Josef Albers, Walter Peterhans and Joost Schmidt — needless to say, an impressive roster of tutors. It is possible to discern in his art suggestions of what he might have learned from each — including, as hinted at in the first paragraph above, a strong sense of Bauhaus craftsmanship but it is noteworthy that the direction his art was to take throughout his career can be seen in a work of 1927. This work, Weiss wird Schwarz (White Becomes Black), is the design for an abstract animated film, similar in style perhaps to the work of Hans Richter and Oskar Fischinger, two of the pioneers of this medium. In this sense, the 40 panels are somewhat derivative in style and vocabulary utilizing the familiar streamlined forms of the 1920's, although this is clearly a work by a precocious young man. As the title suggests, the positive forms shift from black to white and back several times, just as the forms themselves are first at one time circular and then
angular. There is considerable spatial illusion or implied space (are the forms increasing in size, for instance, or moving forward in space?) —familial but clever devices, and yet it is a pleasure to study these panels at some length. Despite their... Kranz experimented in this medium. The Bauhaus was many things to many people, and even at this late date in its relatively brief existence there was room for more than technological studies and industrial design. There are some very interesting Herbert Bayer photographs from this time, for instance, with his poster for Chanel No. 5, 1925, in sharp contrast to his version of the "new typography" —all sans serif, with rules and bullets organizing the design like a de Stijl painting. Kranz's photomontage Marionette is no more surreal than some of Moholy's from this period, and the latter is rarely called a surrealist.

Einigkeit (Agreement) is a photo-collage from the same time and suggests the dark side of the Bauhaus sensibility, an often caustic wit which surfaces in the work of a number of artists active at this institution although rarely in their best known works. Kranz also continued to experiment with animated film, as in his 1931 production of The Heroic Arrow, to which he affixes the comment: "An heroic, persevering arrow to overcome any obstacle and opponent. Although spotted in many different forms and... the arrow will enter the sphere of timelessness."

More provocative for the development of his later works, perhaps, is a witty photo-collage entitled Gekrummte Wand (Curved Wall) depicting battleships as seen through a series of windows. The play of illusion clearly works on more than one level here, and a sequential format has been de-emphasized in favor of a more random pattern of variable form. In this work, as in later works, various options of direction are left to the viewer rather than pre-selected by the artist. Uncertain, perhaps, is the role of subject in these early works. Do the political and social overtones implicit in the subject matter of some of the early works, is little sense of polemic—rather, the somewhat ironic detachment of Dada-Surrealism. Certainly, the vocabulary of form in such works as Einheit (Agreement) indicates a stylistic origin from this direction.

Following the dissolution of the Bauhaus in 1933, Kranz became the head of Bayer's studio in Berlin. Much of his work from this period is commercial: covers for the magazine Neue Linie, advertising art and exhibition design. There is humor in the works coming from Bayer's shop in those days, and undoubtedly much of it can be attributed to Kranz. Following the war, most of which Kranz spent in Norway and Finland, he began the slow and probably painful process of reestablishing himself in Germany. He has been in Hamburg since 1950, and a series of the film on the Light-Space Module, although it should be noted that, unlike much contemporary participatory art, the artist is in full command of the range of choice at all times. In Nocturne the character of the work can change from almost geometric to almost abstract to paradigmatic. In fact, it is possible to say that either radiate out from the center or, as the objects change form, they also shift back and forth from three to two dimensions with occasional changes in interior color. Again, there is a confrontation between the obviously organic and abstract forms. Other works in this series are even more series. From Out to In is structured on a series of radiating square —thus adding to the mix a sense of constructivism, an overlay of surrealism on top of Josef Albers. The objects either radiate out from the center or, as the title suggests, read from the exterior square into the center one. Stern-totem (Star Totem) is eccentrically composed and by far the most complex of this group of works, since it does not move in a regular sequence. The center form, from which all the arms progress, is a linear construction made up of sequences of square, triangle, and circle—each one a series of form which derives ultimately from Italian Renaissance humanism. Here, however, the shapes do not organize a figural composition but progress wildly into a number of variations, for the most part increasingly organic toward the end of each sequence.

A further innovation of Kranz within his conceptual framework has been to involve the viewer as a participant through his folding graphics and paintings. Even a small number of folding panels allows an enormous number of combinations and permits the viewer to change the sequence of the folds and the order of art—even if it should be noted that, unlike much contemporary participatory art, the artist is in full command of the range of choice at all times. In Nocturne the character of the work can change from almost geometric to almost abstract to paradigmatic. In fact, it is possible to say that