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TEXTS IN ENGLISH

TOWARD ACCESSIBLE INFORMATION

By Andrée PARADIS

Two principles guide our policy on artistic information. The first, to present the range of present trends while limiting ourselves to what seems to be registered in a line of evolution. The second consists of making the work of art understandable, that of yesterday and that of today, since there is no creation without communication.

We are often asked to what extent we endorse the new experiments we present. One might as well ask us to guarantee the lasting quality and the established price of the works of art. This seems difficult to us. Our aim is very different. Through our authors, who have to defend certain choices, we must render an account of the art which is being produced, fit it into context, so as to renew interest in the accomplishments of the past, transmitters of myths and witnesses of a continual human ideal. We wish to make the works accessible and to induce around them a need for curiosity, if not desire. We seek also to reflect the climate of artistic interest, as it presents itself around us, of which the least one can say is that it is eclectic if one takes into account the variety of the exhibitions shown to a public which follows them more and more regularly, without omitting the success of numerous showings and publications of artistic character.

It is almost superfluous to add that the magazine article is neither a book nor a catalog; at best, it remains a good introduction to a better knowledge of the artistic phenomenon. Thus, the section which we devote to engraving is far from being thorough. It simply attempts to fix attention on a form of art which is making great strides at this time. This is the golden age of engraving in numerous copies. In the hands of artists, engraving has occupied a more and more important position. The first prints made here were produced in very few copies and available only to a small number of connoisseurs. During the last few years, we have been witnessing an astonishing proliferation of the arts of engraving and the production of the engravers is, we believe, of a quality no less astonishing. The quantity of engraved works then poses the problem of their distribution to the public at large. Some attempts have been made in this direction by studios of engravers, by guilds of graphic works, by groups of artists. L'Association des Graveurs du Québec was formed parallelly, which tries to find solutions to this same problem by uniting the greatest possible number of Quebec engravers and by increasing the activities tending to promote the arts of engraving. The principal aim of the A.G.Q. is to inform the public of the existence of engraving in Quebec and of its vitality, to give information on the techniques used in the production of the works in order that we may be able to distinguish an original print from a simple reproduction or a facsimile, and finally, in time, to make engraving accessible to all and not solely to a small group of enlightened amateurs.

The popularity and the success of the A.G.Q. booth at the Salon des Métiers d'Art in the course of the last two years allow us to think that our aims and intentions are entirely realistic and achievable if we can but continue this action of becoming sensitive to an art which, in Quebec, does not cease to assert itself and to blossom.

(Translation by Mildred Grand)

ENGRAVING IN QUEBEC... WITHOUT A HISTORY

By Gérard TREMBLAY

In the history of humanity, the art of engraving is certainly one of the most ancient. Previously, prehistoric man used to engrave with flint on the walls of his cave the form of the animal he was going to hunt. Engraving and sculpture seem to have preceded the other forms of plastic art; while making use of material in the natural state, stone, wood, bark — primitive man began to inscribe his system of signs and created for himself a visual language which would provide him with a greater communication with his fellows.

Much later, with the appearance of paper, the engraved image, before the letter, rapidly became a means of communication with the greatest number who did not yet know how to read.

The art of the engraver is a major art, primordial, and not, as many believe or claim, a simple technique for reproducing an image in numerous copies. In the hands of artists, engraving has been for a long time, has always been, a genuine means of expression. In Quebec, for only a few years, engraving has occupied a more and more important position. The first prints made here were produced in very few copies and available only to a small number of connoisseurs. During the last few years, we have been witnessing an astonishing proliferation of the arts of engraving and the production of the engravers is, we believe, of a quality no less astonishing. The quantity of engraved works then poses the problem of their distribution to the public at large. Some attempts have been made in this direction by studios of engravers, by guilds of graphic works, by groups of artists. L'Association des Graveurs du Québec was formed parallelly, which tries to find solutions to this same problem by uniting the greatest possible number of Quebec engravers and by increasing the activities tending to promote the arts of engraving. The principal aim of the A.G.Q. is to inform the public of the existence of engraving in Quebec and of its vitality, to give information on the techniques used in the production of the works in order that we may be able to distinguish an original print from a simple reproduction or a facsimile, and finally, in time, to make engraving accessible to all and not solely to a small group of enlightened amateurs.

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(Translation by Mildred Grand)

ÉDOUARD LACHAPELLE, A NAIVE PAINTER?

By Edwige ASSELIN

Bear in mind that the aim of painting is to render the invisible visible, and that with such a goal, it is not astonishing that painting should be a foolish thing at which one can simply laugh. (Édouard Lachapelle, type manuscript, September 1971)

An exact definition has never been found of those who are called for want of a better name, the Naïve. Naïveté is a state which goes against logic, which, itself, records the accumulation and makes it coherent. Naïve art, autonomous, does not develop by a succession of the acquired; contrary to other forms of expression, it passes through history.

The naïve painter cannot lay claim to logical structures where he loses his own character. Let us bring out certain common traits which distinguish him from other painters: only very rarely does he make a profession of painting; he does not have the culture which involves judgment, but that, more subtle, which awakens sensitivity; he paints what are dreams of or what is nostalgic to him, simple life, daily deeds, a friendly work of children, and simple pleasant celebrations.

He has also in common with the primitive artists, this unity of tone which makes it possible for us to think that beyond the concepts of nationality man always has mutual aspirations.

Present art is becoming more and more intellectual, is tending progressively to be dehumanized, to be no longer the expression of a man but the sensitive plate of collectivity. The artist no longer produces work, emanation of his sensitive Id, he establishes a system of references (objects found, chosen, assembled) to signify a state of collective thought.

Naïve art passes through the event as a legend. If it sometimes undergoes the consequences of certain exterior occurrences, that is, that it is not rational, that it is not scientific, that it is not efficient, that it is not, in a word, rational, it is not rational, it is not useful, it is not productive, it is not a goal, it is not a goal. It is not surprising that painting should be a foolish thing at which one can simply laugh.

Naïve art passes through the event as a legend. If it sometimes undergoes the consequences of certain exterior occurrences, it is not surprising that painting should be a foolish thing at which one can simply laugh.

The world of the naive painter rests on series of principles and simple dreams. Technical skill varies, but it is a matter less of the acquired; contrary to other forms of expression, it passes through history.

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Saint-Viateur College, at the beginning of 1966. In November, 1968, he presented Les Poissons et autres marins at the Claude-Champagne Hall in Outremont, and then came the Hiboux exhibited at the same place, then at the Chasse-Galerie in Toronto, in May 1971. In mid-summer of the same year, the Centre du Livre, at the National Centre of the Arts in Ottawa, showed thirty-seven small works. The winter of 1972 found him in Morocco, where he painted a decoration in the style of the Thousand and One Nights, at the At- Baamrane Hotel in Sidi Ifni. The work lasted three months with a salary of a Pantagruelic meal every day, given by the manager of the hotel.

Shortly before this Arab episode, Edouard Lachapelle became artistic advisor to the Marie-Calumet dance troupe. This group ordered a series of linocuts on the theme of the legend of Marie Calumet from him. As he was much gifted in the work of engraving which satisfied his taste for minute detail, Lachapelle prepared sixty-eight subjects, printed in black and white and in colour.

Marie Calumet serves here as pretext. The person who actually lived at the end of the nineteenth century was a servant at the home of the parish priest at l'Islet. Her love for the beadle entered into legend and she became the subject of folk songs, in 1904, Rodophe Naquet created a cantate called "Hiboux dans le neige," which was placed on the Index by Monsieur Bruchési. The author, for having written this impious book, found himself without work.

The series is of a graphism at the same time naive and refined. Alone, a song illustrated in two versions, Une chanson et Trois points de suspension (more indecent!) is close to the legend. We find Marie Calumet with Julie, the niece of the painter, in different comical or burlesque situations, in historic or ethnic disguises or occupied in playing tiddlywinks.

Two engravings are especially beautiful, Le Feu de la Véase à jeux, with very fine lines and lettering which serves as decorative motif. Linoleum not being suitable for lines and fine cutting, because it crushes and shreds too easily, these two works allow to appreciate the artist's great mastery of the medium. Besides, graphism sometimes becomes fancy-work. "Be careful, you are going to fall into kitsch," warns the author of the danger.

Compositions with large surfaces and lines such as Une grosse Marie Calumet, placid, attractive, which fills the page fully, and Au Concert, where three pears serve as string instruments, demonstrate the versatility of the artist. Three engravings take up again a favourite theme of the author: Urgame ou la chouette dans un chêne, Hibou-Houx and Les Hiboux dans le neige, all three successfully plastic and whimsical. In the poetic mood, Les quatre saisons enchant the eye, especially L'Été with a very beautiful setting, with an enormous sun and little Julie, whom we discover in the midst of rank weeds. To classify is restrictive, and far be it from me to try to suppress that spontaneous label, but we can without doubt qualify the original development of Edouard Lachapelle as naive in this sense that it does not have the implications proper to certain artists of today and that his work is detached from the contemporary attempts of avant-garde. A fresh, fanciful development, which amuses and enchants the eye.

(Translation by Mildred Grand)
Transpositions — Music
Thus André Bergeron succeeds — not in illustrating a text which it was not possible to illustrate, under pain of betrayal, to an even greater degree, that it was not necessary to illustrate to remain faithful to its spirit, to its message — but in holding up, in the face of such verses, the images which are a kind of transposition of them. Let us, for example, look at those which, in poem 1, answer the first line of the first stanza and the second line of the fifth verse; and we will immediately feel. I am sure, with what good fortune are expressed there (figure 3) the "nuit obscure" and here (figure 2) "the aurore amiable". An abundance of stars in the sky of the first lithograph, which shine through I know not what mysterious ray of spiritual light; a wide band of clarity which stretches to the horizon, in the second, and whose reflections already reach the earth and the clouds: these are two moments of the night, two stages of mystical life, two states of the soul in the presence of God, which Bergeron expresses in these two plates.

We understand, consequently, what he intended to make and what he made. It is not — fortunately — an illustration of the Cantique spirituel, which rejects all illustration. It is rather an accompaniment to his verses by a lithographed music. The work of Bergeron thus makes me think of the lieder by which a Schubert established a harmony parallel to that of the poems he illustrated. Musical, his book is such right from its cover (figure 1). I ought rather to say from its opening, where the unfolding of great organs creates the cosmic dimension on which is found the dialogue of the Soul and God. It remains such during the course of his pages, well rhythmized by the stanzas of the Spaniard and the pictures of the Canadian. So that we, the readers, can enter better into the luminous shadows, through which the great mystic guide us, and better feel one of the most beautiful poems to have come from the pen of a human being.

(Translation by Mildred Grand)

Jennifer Dickson —
An Art That Transcends Time

By Judy HEVIZ

The forewarning of early death can affect individuals in different ways. It may result in a defenseless surrender to the hands of fate, or perhaps a desperate fight to extort the maximum from each day. The annals of art hold many cases in which the knowledge of an abridged life-span acted as a creative fertilizer that concentrated a tremendous strength in the oeuvre of those who died young.

The impulse that drove them to their heights was felt last year — but fortunately without the ensuing tragedy — by Jennifer Dickson. The South-African born, British printmaker, who settled in Montreal four years ago, became seriously ill with blood toxemia, brought about by two decades of breathing fumes from the nitric acid she had worked with as both artist and teacher.

Recovered from the ordeal, her reaction was one of great courage and strength. Instead of giving up her work in the field of etching she set about creating her eighth major suite, concretizing the results of her dramatic trial in an impressive body of work. Done in ten months, the suite holds more than 60 pieces; a remarkable achievement for such an incredibly short span of time, especially when one considers that she executed alone all the work, every step of her complicated printing process.

Entitled Sweet Death and other Pleasures, the series comprises as well as prints, paintings, shadow boxes and low relief sculptures based on plates of her earlier prints. First revealed in simultaneous exhibitions in Montreal’s 1640 and Martal Galleries this winter, the suite is to be presented at Dresdner Gallery, Toronto, and the prints at Oxford, England, in solo shows this Spring.

These works serve to confirm the qualities Jennifer Dickson has previously displayed in her art. She was already an artist of great maturity who, in any case, would have followed a path of creative devotion. Her route was marked by such signposts — to mention but a few — as the Prix des Jeunes Artistes pour la Gravure at the 1963 Paris Biennale, participation in more than 200 group exhibitions, 18 solo shows, prints in the permanent collections of major museums (among them the Victoria and Albert and British Museums, Hermitage, Metropolitan and Smithsonian Institute) and teaching activity in England, the U.S.A., Jamaica and Montreal.

Her impressive solo retrospective at the Saidye Bronfman Centre in 1970 unveiled to the public the many facets of her art; her masterwork as a printmaker (she was associated for five years with S. W. Hayter’s famous Atelier 17 in Paris), and the lyricism of her inspiration. Since then her art has widened in dimensions and deepened in profoundness, but preoccupations stemming from her basic gifts, natural inclinations and feminine sensibility continue as permanent factors.

Throughout her total oeuvre there is an obvious concern for eternal human feelings such as love and tenderness, man’s ties with nature, the inner need for beauty or reconciliation with the universal powers that direct our destinies. Their resonance in her art is as diverse as the expression of melancholic moods that embody them; their linking chains, the use of symbolism, sometimes easily deciphered, in other cases requiring a profound immersion in her interior world.

In her silkscreen series Out of Time, for example, there often appears (almost as a trade-mark of lighthearted, unchallenged happiness) a couple backed by a peaceful sea and broad sky. However, in her latest work this naked joyfulness is replaced by a mysterious symbol of secret love, hidden behind the masked imagery of 18th century Venetian couples.

She places the lovers in the refined setting of the Venetian Carnival, where their identity can be disguised by cloak and mask. They are surrounded by the frivolous crowd, yet they seem to be as alone as the pair on the deserted beach.

It was no accident that she turned to Venice. As a student she studied the oeuvre of Canaletto, Guardi and Longhi, and a visit to the city produced a déjà-vu impact on her. Also, Venice of the 18th century was ideal for her purposes because this was the time when its earlier glory as Pearl of the Adriatic had faded so tragically that only the scenes of the bygone century and her time-transcending capacity enable her to capture the strange atmosphere of the day. To express particular mystery and morbidity she sometimes uses a fine aquatint in a style harmonious with the minuteness of Canaletto. In other cases she utilises etching and Longhi paintings. But always her approach — focusing on specific aspects in order to meet her own concepts — reveals her personal interpretation.

Although Jennifer Dickson has built up this body of work in an intuitive step by step process, each composition is perfectly in tune with her personal philosophy. What make

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THE SUMMER OF FERNAND BERGERON

By Bernard LÉVI

Fernand Bergeron has been living in Baie-Comeau since the autumn of 1970. He teaches French there, but, especially, he does engraving. Yet Fernand Bergeron originates from Montreal, where he was born in 1937. He arrived there before settling on the North Coast.

At the École des Beaux-Arts, in 1954-1955, he was a student of the Pierre Ayo studio; it was in March 1959 that he published his first engravings. Since then, he has shown engravings in Paris, Basle and in Vancouver, with the Graph group, and his plans to perfect his art in Basle, Switzerland.

The recent work of Fernand Bergeron is strongly marked by his sojourn at Baie-Comeau. We perceive it from the beginning: the open expression of her most intimate feelings. Consequently her work emits artistic sensibility at a high frequency that makes her messages easily receivable. The generator is her high esthetic sense, revealed through the lyrical beauty of her imagery and the obvious expressiveness of her drypoints. An excellent example is her color etched Song of Songs series in which she identifies the beloved woman with plants and flowers as expressions of supreme splendour. In a more enclosed way the lilies that embrace the body of a high priestess in her latest series bespeak a certain purity, relating well to the vestals of ancient myths. In both cases she relies on a forceful and monumental image that has immediate impact. In the first the accent is on the sculptural virulence of dense forms; in the second she exploits the large contrasting light and shadow areas that are achieved through abstracting the figure.

In other works one can also follow an affinity for particular images because of their expressive potential. The labyrinthine criss-cross of tree branches near her former home, several years ago, suggests an experiment with a negative photographic image printed on glass; placed over a painted background it produced a special graphic beauty. A similar expression, but more dramatic, is achieved in the newest work from the base limbs of a winter tree stretched from a frozen lake. Photographs, and included in several compositions, it is at its best when printed on the plexiglass of a shadow-box in which a backing water-color enhances the effect of deep perspective and endless desolation.

Jennifer Dickson often prints from photographic images, but her technical security permits their inclusion alongside minute etchings and superimposed painted sequences, without any risk of upsetting compositional balance. Her unerring judgement weighs the various technical effects so that they complement each other. The results are fine textures, dense tonal shades, almost merging colour values and a tightly knitted unity.

For example in Meditation, her sitting female figure takes on simultaneous appearance of water-colour, lino-cut, wood-cut and lithography through the reworking of the photograph negative, which is the image's base. Typically, the enrichment of the initial print is due to the fact that Jennifer Dickson does not use the photograph for a quick solution, but as a point of departure to an expressive end result. She watches that its rôle is not highlighted in her compositions but instead harmoniously into the full play of elements.

Dickson has used photographic images in the past but the photogravure facilities at the Fine Arts Department of the University of Wisconsin in Madison, where she taught last year, has equipped her with the first time to execute every stage of the process herself. That she should want to do this is characteristic of the type of artist she is — a scientific experimenter who must explore all paths. With the spirit of a Renaissance creator, she continually seeks new means of expression that correspond to her potential and sensibility. She knows no forbidden or bordered territories.

Warm Quebec: one can dream about it. Summer in Quebec: we can believe it. We can at least stop for the time necessary to examine the nine engravings of Fernand Bergeron which make up the album Les nuits blanches de Nini de Saint-H lé petite.

Afterward, we can still dream about it; we can believe it with still more obstinacy: but we can no longer forget "that summer". The pleasure is too keen. As for nights, white or not, they are in the image of this season, too short, but in that of the engravings, too beautiful.

Nine engravings. We are struck right at first by the simplicity of the composition. We would be tempted to speak of the natural, so much does the tone appear direct. The main object surges forth without ambiguity. The simplicity of the whole and the composition without overload fulfills the intentions of the artist: he tries to surprise and to awaken curiosity. He succeeds wonderfully in this but, especially, with humour. Thus, for example, he does not hesitate in La Lune rose de midi to place a person whose colouring goes from turquoise blue to dark khaki, sitting, his limbs, hair in the wind, on a background of earth, sea and green and blue-green sky. Or again, in Bella grand'tourche d'Adon, there is a pair of white lace panties which catches the view at the top of two pink legs on a blue background.

Simplicity, not simplism. For detail surprises again and once more arouses curiosity. In these nine engravings there is a solicitude for perfection and a delicate precision in the carefully noted detail which make all their art and charm. The lithograph titled Aux vues shows a special care of the artist for a flowery curtain which uncovers, on the side, on a background of night, two buttocks of tender pink. Elsewhere, Montrant-culs, the attention paid by Fernand Bergeron to the hair of the nude couple, surprised behind the rocks, gives an idea of the odd humour of this album.

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new deluxe albums. We know that Graff previously published in 1967 *Pillularum* and in 1970 *Les Plottes*, two albums which were exhibited across the country and which grouped the works of several artists of the studio. This time, each book. The spirit of *L'Aptopuceau* is playful, accompanied by a single artist who sometimes sought the collaboration of a poet, a story-teller or simply of someone who would add the art of writing to the art of the image. These artists are figurative and depart from reality, to transform it into a poem, a symbol, a fantasy, to endeavor to clarify its components precisely. The image, like what is written, besides, maintains with the real particularly ambiguous relationships and pictorial realism remains more than ever a trap.

At a time where precision of line and of drawing could seem to be one of the surest means of achieving a faithful reproduction of reality, the drawing of the three following artists reflects, on the contrary, the mark of interior forces, imaginary worlds, in sum the escape from the extraneous proper to the image which comes out of this crisis.

Carl Daoust, poet of the image as well as the word, invites us to penetrate the secret of a block box with a metallic clasp whose interior lined in mauve contains yellow envelopes bound with a red ribbon and enhanced by an etched stamp. Each letter contains that text and a little engraving dedicated to a woman who, however, has little connection with the content of the text or the picture, these "dead letters" being especially letters of recognition. Doust tells us that the dry and concise style of the drawing gives the details of a cruel, indifferent and artificial reality while everywhere humour and tenderness are evident. While sometimes making use of certain idioms of symbolic and surrealistic language, the thought of Daoust is different, at the same time more complex and more concrete.

Before the *Sept péchés capitaux*, an album of engravings where imagination makes itself master. Normand Ulrich published *Fantasmes* which brings to its ultimate end the control of this ardent and delicate graphism. The latter entrenches itself especially in the shadows and the semi-darkness of a main subject and since its inception this little network is little by little. Each silk-screen is a visual hallucination where the least element is exploited and sometimes follows, in an original manner, the tradition begun by Cosimo, Botticelli and Vinci. The precision of the line and the abundance of themes elaborated only render more alive the reality of the objects, the persons and the human masses which swarm and which, one might say, move the times perhaps to escape their fate.

Fantasy and lyricism further characterize the moving waves of Lyne Rivard's drawing. Humans, animals, plants and things of all kinds are in her album from now on a tapestry of images which come alive one after the other. *Histoire d'A*, as the artist says, is a sort of comic strip where live a multitude of elements all calling themselves "A" and with which writings are intermingled. Rivard, who also does a lay-out illustrator in a publishing enterprise, takes courage in his liberty to enter upon this research in composition, integrating image and text as well as a research of escape which is intended to be total.

Lino-engraving, which by its very material whose unctuousness and velvety quality coaxes the eye and encourages touching, introduces into the image realities of another kind which, for want of being more concrete, will at least be more tangible.

Josette Trépanier's album conquers right from the first by the real attraction of the material and the colour-form, rich and genealogical. It is a universe of fragments, sometimes the most mysterious, in symbols or even in certain realities in which men and animals seem to be tamed and ready for their circus trick that is often life. Man finally loses everything, even his head, for the benefit of a beautiful costume. The text of *En marchant vers l'atelier* by J. Trépanier expresses, on the other hand, a perfect continuity of the written image where flora and fauna are always present in the latent drama created by man himself.

Pour les nuits blanches de Nini de St-H petite, Fernand Bergeron tells in his big book of lovely stories printed on a bed of summer leaves, when the nine pictures speak of trees, sun, water, beaches and the enjoyment of objective reality, which is probably, in part, that of the north coast where Bergeron lives. He previously produced a series of engravings in black and white, a genuine collection of old Canadian houses steeped in mystery where one felt the same serenity and the same love of nature. The former is a way to the technique of impression, on account of a more definite line, and due to the use of pastel tones, gives off greater warmth and humanity, a sort of invitation to natural happiness which makes Rousseau so present and so timely.

It is also what allows Jean Brodeur to find his individuality. Fauna, flora and plants in particular, tied to woman, make his album, *Animofemmes et plantoiseaux*, a book symbolic and humorous at the same time, sensitive and very strong. The pictures and texts of Jean Brodeur seem to bring about a merging of what surrounds him and the abandon to certain interior turbulences, conscious or unconscious. The line is free, powerful and expressive. In a few lines, much is said. The lyricism of the drawing which animates this intuitive work implies something of the painter's sincerity, which one feels through the form-colour of each of these granddaughter engravings.

Hannelore Storm is German and she is the only one to use the technique of lithography as a means of expression. Having lived a little everywhere, she tries to channel, in what she calls her "landscapes", the spirit, the atmosphere of these countries, these cities and these country areas she has known and felt. While Seattle, for example, was for her hard and cold, Montreal is all melancholy, snow, intimacy and poetry. Better than the Montrealers themselves, she knew where Bergeron lives. He previously produced a series of engravings in black and white, a genuine collection of old Canadian houses steeped in mystery where one felt the same serenity and the same love of nature. The former is a way to the technique of impression, on account of a more definite line, and due to the use of pastel tones, gives off greater warmth and humanity, a sort of invitation to natural happiness which makes Rousseau so present and so timely.

It is also what allows Jean Brodeur to find his individuality. Fauna, flora and plants in particular, tied to woman, make his album, *Animofemmes et plantoiseaux*, a book symbolic and humorous at the same time, sensitive and very strong. The pictures and texts of Jean Brodeur seem to bring about a merging of what surrounds him and the abandon to certain interior turbulences, conscious or unconscious. The line is free, powerful and expressive. In a few lines, much is said. The lyricism of the drawing which animates this intuitive work implies something of the painter's sincerity, which one feels through the form-colour of each of these granddaughter engravings.

Simplifying, in bright and varied colours, expresses better, for André Dufour, the profound nature of man. He wishes to touch on his basic needs such as "dreams, liberty, sleep, T.V., pink elephants and chewing gum..."
This series of nine pictures is full of humour and hyperrealist reality of the picture and the opposite, thus creating a special dialogue between complete deprivation. Often, the artist adds, outright or against the photograph or vice versa, which the artist fixes on the picture. Only the dadaists, which the artist takes himself. The twelve photographs which the artist takes himself, the album and intimate journal. Some pastel tones emphasize the dada image as well as the atmosphere of melancholy and docility that she suggests through the face of her persons. She speaks of "the dream of the world, of which the artistic and emotional elements of the image emanate something of the great romantic tradition. It is the greatest destitution, the most complete deprivation. Often, the artist adds, outright or against the photograph or vice versa, what causes to be born this banana being the monkey and the primate with the potatoes being man. The sounds, the words, as well as the colours and the picture itself, form an observation directed toward the world and research which aims at the original and the basic.

Thibodeau, also, goes back to sources. He works with small, almost bacterial elements in the shape of sticks, spirals or simply rounded whose tones are in general pastel. The artists, who is only twenty-two years old, and who teaches at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts in Montreal, now superimposes such elements in the form of photo-silkscreenings and photographic precision bestow an astonishing vitality and strength. The eye, especially, takes on an inordinate importance, while it is for the artist "the sublime organ and it is necessary to treat its function at the exact moment by what one sees". What one sees here is also a tribute to the eye of the animal, of man, of the artist or of the observer.

The eye of the camera, it too, today, has all power. This attention to the world, of which Lichtenstein speaks so often, has become such among artists that only the methods and instruments of photographic reproduction seem to capture a sufficiently adequate and real image. Photography has taken on an inordinate importance, while it is for the artist "the sublime organ and it is necessary to treat its function at the exact moment by what one sees". What one sees here is also a tribute to the eye of the animal, of man, of the artist or of the observer.

The twelve photographs of Jacques Lafond roar out the power and the density of violence, of masks, of play and of life. It is the ascendancy of man. Clipping from newspapers, glued to the first page, announce exciting matches, anticipating being worthy of the attention of everyone, of certain nooks and corners of the taverns, of the customers or of those who work there. Chez Fada, name of a club on St. Lawrence Boulevard, is the title of this rich, strong work. Beer, alcohol, forgetfulness, solitude, yes, but above all a symbol, an identity, the joy of drinking and of living.

Leclair seems to realize the world from a strictly positive point of view and reflects our environment in a clear and noncritical fashion.

Pierre Ayot, guiding spirit of Graff since its founding and professor at the University of Quebec, is the urban artist par excellence, of this city whose very culture is, as we all know, of a productive, continuous and consumer character. Accumulations, piling up of boxes, of perforations, of gum balls ("two for a cent") also have certain connections in poetry in the novel. The album or in the new novel, etc. The album of the magnificent box of candy that the artist offers to all of us this year, and which he titled Rose nanan comprises a multitude of sweet things of all colours. Ayot presents them in the form of photo-silkscreenings and even has their recipe given by Jehane Benoit. These tempting things are clad in a suspicion of mystery and elegance, sometimes losing their identity, to the benefit of mass and structure. The artist works with the latent and not yet perceived quaintness of current, new or worn-out objects, and finally creates a reality more subjective than objective.

The ambiguity of this reality is, in truth, what characterizes the Groupe Média Gravures et Multiples?

THE MULTIPLES OF MEDIA GRAVURES

By Luce VERMETTE

Creativity and originality, united with a great vitality, with a great dynamism, that is what characterizes the Groupe Média Gravures et Multiples?

Objectively, these epiphanies can easily be applied to different artistic events. But how do they qualify those of the Groupe Média Gravures et Multiples, and, first, what are their achievements?
In November 1969, young Montreal artists united and formed the Groupe Média Gravures et Multiples. The primary aim of this group is to distribute their works by an organization managed by themselves. The group is presently made up of Jean Noël, Yvon Cozic, Gilles Boisvert, Lise Bissonnette, Michel Leclair and Marc-André Gagné. Their field of action is vast and experimental. In this, they depart from the frames of traditional media. It is an art of integration by the individual, of environment and life in general. It is also the art of the transitory. The objects created are "parts of life" and live only for the time of their endurance, a very precious moment since it is no longer possible of being recovered. These visual and temporal manifestations demand the physical involvement of the individual and aim at bringing forth visual and tactile perceptions, which cause an awareness of forms, space and time.

One of the first showings of the Groupe Média was their participation at the Salon des Métiers d'Art du Québec, in 1969. Since that time, the experiment was repeated until last year. At the same time, a group project came to pass. Because, if each of the members individually followed his own research, the need for producing a group work soon became apparent. After several plans, Pack sack took shape. An exhibition of multiples and engravings — the whole comprising twenty-five copies, — Pack sack is also a mounting in which spectators and members of the group take part. A travelling exhibition was organized; it went to Besse, Lausanne, Paris, Toronto, Winnipeg, Stratford, Rouyn, Sherbrooke and Montreal. The film that was produced about this event was presented at the quarters of the Groupe, last February.

In November 1971, the Groupe Média opened quarters on Sherbrooke St. in Montreal, with the intention of presenting its own exhibitions and receiving other groups or isolated experiments. Thus in January 1973 they welcomed Serge Lemoyne, who put on a happening, Party d’étoiles. The latter consisted of tournaments of hockey matches — hockey games of different periods — and the winners carried off trophies produced by the artists. Following this came the exhibition of slides, photographs and tapestries of the Moins de 35, then the slides of Jean-Marie Delavalle, the works of Jean-Serge Champagne and Claude Mongrain, and, finally, those of André Pagé. Groupe Média reserved for itself an exhibition — happening, at Christmas 1972, titled Noël, c’est pas un cadeau à 99¢. It will also present, in May 1973, a group exhibition of works with erotic themes. This latter exhibition will be used in exchanges with other exterior groups. Because, if Group Média intends to present the works of its members at least once a year in solo exhibitions or in groups, it wishes, on the other hand, to send their works out and to execute exchanges with outside spheres, be it in Canada or out of the country. In that lies the proof of the great dynamism of this group, whose survival we ardently desire.

(Translation by Mildred Grand)

**TRENDS IN THE GUILDE GRAPHIQUE**

By Luce VERMETTE

Founded in 1966 by Richard Lacroix, the Gilde Graphique was at the beginning only a co-operative orientated toward the publishing of Canadian engravings. To-day it is a professional establishment and a commercial enterprise, publishing and distributing the works of contemporary painter-engravers.

At the Gilde Graphique are produced, by the processes of lithography, screen-printing, etching, relief and moulded plastic, the works of more than thirty artists, among whom are Ferron, Hébert, Lacroix, McLaren, Molinari, Pellan, Savoy, Steinhouse, Tousignant and many others as eminent.

Presently the Gilde Graphique is announcing the publication of Kittie Bruneau’s album, Entre chien et loup and of three silk-screens by Alfred Pellan. The Kittie Bruneau album comprises six etchings in colour, with a poem by Michael La Chance. Thereone finds a picture of the animal tribe in a strong and original work, where imagination and fantasy are dominant (La Chouette, La Licorne, La Chimère). Alfred Pellan’s three silk-screens in several colours are related to the series Polychromées (Polychromée B, M and T): three female figurations, woven from a network of forms and geometric signs high in colour give evidence of Pellan’s involvement in the picturing of the human person, which he recreates entirely.

(Translation by Mildred Grand)

THE EARLY SCULPTURE OF QUEBEC,
A MANIFESTATION OF POPULAR ART?

By Jean TRUDEL

The term popular art is extremely difficult to define; it has given rise to definitions as numerous as there are people to make those definitions. To try to apply this term to the early sculpture of Quebec is not an easy task. The personal approach made here is in no way definitive, far from it. If it can contribute to advancing, however little, the state of knowledge on the early arts of Quebec, we shall have attained our goal.

In order to simplify this approach, we are going to deal only with religious figurative sculpture. In a colony, which, since its beginnings, has been very strongly structured by the Catholic religion, it is not surprising to see sculpture on wood become one of the principal exterior manifestations of this religion. In the interior of the churches, the clergy and the faithful create a religious environment of prime importance in the life of all and in everyday life. This religious environment is at the basis of a decor sculpted in the chancel of the church which includes, in an architectural frame, ornamental sculpture and figurative sculpture. Without this need of religion to create a physical setting which is the most beautiful on earth, there would never have been attempts, from the 17th century, to establish viable artistic traditions in New France.

Sculpture of a figurative character is only one aspect of the craft of the sculptor who works in the decoration of churches, but it is doubtless the one which is the most characteristic of him. It allows him to present persons or scenes about which worshippers so often hear in the interior of churches and which resound outside the churches. We know, for example, that there were in Quebec at the corner of certain streets niches in the walls of the houses, niches which held statues having, it seems, a connection with the names of the streets. The best known is the one, which, before containing a statue of Wolfe, had in it a statue of St. John the Baptist, and formed the corner of St. John St. and the Street of the Poor (Palace Hill) in Quebec. Figurative religious sculpture was not limited to the interior of churches; it also occupied the façades of the churches, the intersections of roads, the cemeteries. In this sense, it was a sculpture of the people, a sculpture with which the people lived every day as they lived with the religion whose symbols and devotion it represented. The user, if one might say it, of the sculpture at the same time as its sponsor (directly or through the clergy) was the Quebec people for whom the Catholic religion formed a unifying element of their own individuality. If one went no further, there would truly be no very complex questions concerning Quebec sculpture as popular art, but we would have put aside the sculptors and the works in order to consider only the environment which gave rise to them and conditioned them.

Let us examine a few works, which, by their stylistic characteristics, come nearer to a generalized conception of popular art. The first of these works is a Saint Joseph à l'Enfant Jésus preserved in the Museum of the General Hospital of Quebec. Tradition has it that this sculpture was placed on the first of this institution by its founders, the Hôpitaux de Saint-Augustin, in 1693. Since 1824, Saint Joseph had been the patron of New France; he was also its protector as he had been that of the infant Jesus. An inscription on a manuscript paper glued behind the sculpture could perhaps give us other information if it were deciphered. We do not know who could have done this work, but it must have involved, in spite of its awkwardness, a professional sculptor. The too large hands, the too long feet, the stiffness of the infant Jesus, must not make us forget the admirable treatment of the folds of the cloak and the hair of Saint Joseph. In spite of its tendency to excessive stylisation, this sculpture seems to us, through its plastic expression, nearer to an art called scholarly than to an art called popular. The technique demanded to create it implies on the part of the one who made it an education more extensive than that of a simple man gifted in tinkering.

A polychrome relief picture preserved in the Convent of the Ursulines of Quebec would also be near to a general conception of popular art. Visible in the Museum of Quebec, that of the Adoration of the Virgin, Saint Angele de Méridi, the founder of the Ursulines, and, formerly as today, it would have been placed in the part of the convent reserved for the novices, to be offered to their meditation. According to tradition, it might have been sculpted by a nun; it is not possible for us to accept this tradition, perhaps founded on the clumsiness of the work. At the bottom, at the right, we can read "Th.Ch.F.(?) Scul/1808". An Ursuline, through humility, would not have signed this work while there are already very few signed works in the early sculpture of Quebec. We have not yet been able to trace the name of the sculptor through these initials.

The use of painting and the techniques of the painter to create background and depth is not unusual; other examples are known. However, the iconography is unique. Saint Angele is shown as a Virgin, the Annunciation at her prie-Dieu. She is dressed as an Ursuline and wears the rosary at her belt. The lily represents the virginity to which she vowed herself very early. Her usual symbol, a flowered crucifix, has been broken; she holds it in her hands. Her empty eyes doubtless refer to her temporary blindness. The pilgrim's staff recalls her journey to Jerusalem. In the upper left corner of the picture there is, in a frame, a display of the vision which was the inspiration of her decision to found the order of the Ursulines: a ladder comes down from the sky and virgins wearing a royal crown on their heads go up two by two, accompanied by angels. Above Saint Angele appears a mass of clouds in which we see an angel holding in one hand a crown of stars and in the other a flowering branch.

Such a work is not a spontaneous creation, inspired by fantasy and imagination. Each choice of composition was carefully chosen and those by instance, those by those who ordered the work. What is important to know is that Angele de Méridi lived from 1474 to 1525 and that she was beatified in 1788 to be canonized in 1804. We know now why the relief was made in 1808: it represents in a summary of the principal events of the life of the saint, as well as her canonization. The means of expression of the sculptor are awkward, but can one really say that it is a question of a work of popular art? And in what sense?

Let us take an iconographic theme which does not have the unique character of the relief of the Ursulines, that of the adoring angels. The examples are numerous in the churches of Europe in the 17th and 18th centuries; adoring angels appear on the chancels and on the tabernacles of the altars. In our case, a pair of angels in sculptured wood, gilt and polychrome, is preserved in the Convent of the Ursulines in Quebec. These angels were probably imported from Europe in the first half of the 18th century and were perhaps used as a model by Quebec sculptors. They are, however, quite far from the Angele above and the adoring angels of the Ursulines of Canada owns and which must have come from the Loretto church. This angel has been credited by Gérard Morisset to François-Noël Levasseur (1703-1794) and dated about 1785. These exist several very similar others among which, in particular, are those of Saint-Charles de Bellechasse; that was a kind of work which the sculptor used to repeat with minor variations — in many places, according to orders. It was a work done in series, which takes nothing from its plastic qualities.

Almost a century later, toward the middle of the 19th century, adoring angels were used, very probably, on hearse. They are, in any case, originally painted black. They too are repeated in several copies and made by the same sculptor whom we do not know. A pair of those angels is in the National Gallery of Canada. This is the same iconographic type as the Levasseur, but reduced to its simplest expression. The drapery is indicated only by wide lines made with a gouge. The hands have disappeared. The position of the limbs is scarcely shown and the feet do not exist. Levasseur's angel appears to be a work of scholarly art, but only in the simplification of the forms of the hands and the drapery which the sculptor used to repeat. The angels fulfill their duty well, since they are all produced in series. Among them there are noticeable stylistic differences which, upon the whole, come only from the different training received by the sculptors. And, finally, however, all respect the theme which Levasseur in relationship with European models.

It seems to us that it is a false problem to wish to establish at any price, in what concerns the early sculpture of Quebec, a line of demarcation between a popular art and a scholarly art. The early sculpture was born of the precise needs of society; it is completely integrated into the structures of the
society. One must not believe that the sculptors were free to do what they wished; they too were part of this society which supported them, and, still more, their means of individual expression were strongly conditioned by their education. Perhaps there were marginal sculptors who did not make a living by their art, but if we consider what remains to us of the early sculpture, how can we distinguish their works from those of the professionals, whether we name them artists or craftsmen? It would perhaps be necessary to conclude that the early sculpture of Quebec is very simply a provincial art having its own characteristics, conditioned by its forms, the very diversified aspects of this environment and its evolution. It is in this sense that one could consider it as a manifestation of art of the people.

(For foot-notes, see French text.)

(Translation by Mildred Grand)
On closer examination it appears that the connection between The Nightmare and The Dream of Belinda is no coincidence. The two paintings share much in content and style. Both depict the dream world of women influenced by the evil Mab and the poem and painting as a kind of rape. The ape-like influence is who Mab's agent of evil mounts the sleeping woman in The Nightmare and sits more passively to the left of the malevolent Mab in the Vancouver canvas (hardly visible in our illustration). Both subjects are preoccupied with hair, Belinda's famous lock corresponds to the long tresses of the other woman, which are tangled into "elflocks" by Mab. The paintings share such physical properties as the dressing table — whose jar and crystal base refer to the fragility of woman's chastity — and the curtains. The execution of both is linear and precise, the draperies of the women are remarkably similar, and the light and chiaroscuro are essentially identical.

Even the dimensions of the two paintings match. The (original) Detroit version of The Nightmare measures 40" x 50", whereas The Dream of Belinda, which was trimmed in an early restoration, is one-half inch smaller in each dimension. The only significant physical disparity is found in the dark triangular corners of the Vancouver painting which may originally have been covered by spandrels in the frame.

All evidence suggests a date for The Dream of Belinda around 1782, the year in which The Nightmare was exhibited at the Royal Academy. It is not unlikely that the two paintings may have been conceived as a pair. This connection makes the Vancouver canvas all the more important as an example of Fuseli's work.

Nothing is known about the provenance of The Dream of Belinda other than an unconfirmed report that it came from the collection of the Marchioness of Cholmondely. A close friend and ardent admirer of Fuseli during the 1780's was William Lock; it is tempting to suggest that it may have been he who commissioned the artist to illustrate The Rape of the Lock.

The Vancouver Art Gallery is not alone among Canadian museums in possessing an important work by Fuseli. The Art Gallery of Ontario recently purchased Fuseli's King Lear, Banishing Cordelia (fig. 1). Lear angrily disowns his daughter while General and Regan look on and the Earl of Kent vainly attempts to intercede. This enormous painting — some twelve feet wide — was commissioned by John and Josiah Boydell in the late 1780's for their Shakespeare Gallery in London. The Boydells solicited Shakespearean subjects from all of the leading English painters of the day, exhibited them in their gallery, and profitably sold engravings after the works. The Lear subject was engraved in 1792 by R. Earlom. It has been observed that Fuseli's approach was significantly different from that of H. Fuseli and the etching clearly indicates its importance in European art of the eighteenth century. A number of important recent exhibitions and publications have shed new light on this period, and Fuseli himself the subject of several new books — clearly emerges as one of the great and exciting artists of his time.

1. A detailed discussion of the subject matter and sources of this painting and of The Nightmare may be found in A. H. W. and the Nightmare," Pantheon, XXIX (1971), pp. 23-36.
2. Royal Academy, 1814, no. 12. The Vancouver painting is identified as Queen Mab, in The Art Gallery Bulletin, Ill:3 (Nov. 1934), p. 3.

PRESENT-DAY PAINTING IN CHICAGO

François GAGNON

Contemporary American painting is noticeably absent from the exhibition lists of our museums and galleries. Or, rather, it makes only scattered appearances, discontinuous, always abortive, never followed up. For a Soullages retrospective (July 23 to September 1, 1968), Felto (December 19, 1968 to February 16, 1969) and Vasarely (December, 1971), at the Museum of Contemporary Art, and a Dubuffet retrospective (December 15, 1969 to January 31, 1970) at the Museum of Fine Arts of Montreal, we have had an exhibition organized by the Museum of Modern Art of New York, Jackson Pollock's Works on Paper, at the Museum of Fine Arts of Montreal, a showing of recent works of Hans Hofmann at Myra Godard's last year, very recently a Wall Drawing of Sol Lewitt at the new gallery, Vehicule Art Inc., and a few graphic works of Rauschenberg, Oldenburg, Stella, Kelly and Francis, at the Galerie B, to mention only a few examples.

It is necessary to set aside the effort of the National Gallery, which besides having made important acquisitions in this particular field, organized from the thirteenth of September to the nineteenth of October 1969, a very important Don Flavin retrospective. The fifth floor of the gallery is presently showing American works. Thus, parallel to the Fontainebleau exhibition, one could see, a large picture by Olitski, a Carl André and the Keith by...
With the exception of Art Green, who presents two pictures in this exhibition, these being, *Immoderate Absentee* (1969) and *Undue Concern in relationship to its adventure in relationship to its Marginal one may judge it in relationship to the New York trends which we have just called to mind. It is remarkable if presented, thanks to the collaboration of Hal Thwaites, a participant in the course of *Communication Research* no. 450 at Loyola College under the direction of Dr. M. Malik. We are led, by a completely visual logic, from one picture to the other, the technical label being inscribed on a black arrow, on the floor, in front of each work. I imagine that the great majority of these artists were unknown to the Montreal public.[1]

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THE STEDELIJK MUSEUM IN AMSTERDAM

Luc D'Iberville-Moreau

The Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam is considered by many to be the most alive and dynamic museum of contemporary art in the world. It annually welcomes close to 450,000 visitors in a city whose population is less than that of Montreal or Toronto and which has besides another museum, the Rijksmuseum, known for its famous collection of Rembrandts. These two museums are subsidized by the city of Amsterdam. The Stedelijk receives about $1,850,000 a year. Two-thirds of this budget goes to administration and to the salaries of one hundred eighty employees who are superintended by director Edward de Wilde. The museum is open every day. Sixty-three percent of the visitors to the Stedelijk are between twenty and thirty years of age, fifteen percent between fifteen and twenty. On the average thirty-five major exhibitions a year are organized there and one vernissage a week.

For many people the Stedelijk was the museum where one could admire the famous Van Gogh collections bequeathed by the nephew of the painter, engineer V. W. van Gogh. These are to be found lately in the new Van Gogh Museum, situated right beside in a recently opened museum. The superb collections of Mondrians, of Maleviches, of Stijl, etc., are taken down, changed from one week to another. "We are against permanent exhibitions, that is good for historians of art", Edward de Wilde tells us. "The public must constantly be surprised, thrilled, excited. The aim to be sought is to render art accessible to the public by means which are neither intellectual nor chronological. It is a matter neither of education nor of learning, but of individual awareness." But for others, and it is the majority which counts, the Stadelijk is a museum of contemporary art where, for the last ten years, we have been able to admire contemporary exhibitions.

The list is dazzling: Gabo, Klein, Raysse, Glacadetti, Lam, Kline, Fontana, Lichtenstein, Rauschenberg, Bell, Raynaud, Sam Francis, Warhol, De Kooning, Soto, Arman, Chillida, Ernst, Oldenburg, Stella, Kleinholz, Négrêt, Spoerri, Newman, Agam, Kelly, Monory, Dibbets, etc. If we compare this list of exhibitions with that of prestigious American museums, it shows a much greater international inclination, while paying homage to the best in American creation.

Furthermore, the director defines the art of this century as possessing an international character. "National art is a concept as absurd as national science. The character of a museum of modern art is therefore, by definition, international, since the function of the museum is to adhere closely to art. The museum plays an active rôle when it marks current trends, or when it acts at the same time as organiser, realizer and producer of projects, which, without it, could not be achieved. The artistic situation has presented, since 1960, an image of such variety and its evolution is so swift that the administration of the museum can no longer be founded on the preferential choice of one single person. It must constantly be surprised, thrilled, excited. It is the route of the work of a team, each curator bringing his contribution, which will be determined by the many personal contacts which he maintains with artists."

The director defines the political situation of the museum in this way: "The museum, under the circumstances the ensemble of its officials, finds itself in an ambiguous position in political matters. Either it is a government institution, or it is, as in the United States, managed as a private institution by a certain number of influential people. It is therefore a part of the existing social structure. But it also serves as a platform for contemporary art which very often, consciously or not, has a challenging character. I believe that the museum should have no other criterion than the artistic level, whatever it may be. The challenging work is also a work of art. Art is the expression of all the human experiences of reality. Giving a political aspect to a museum would lead to the abandoning of vast fields of endeavour. A political decision can be demanded of a museum, but giving a political aspect to its activities is quite another thing. The artist makes social demands as numerous as they are justified. By the fact that he is the closest associate of the museum, it therefore behooves the latter to uphold them."

The director of the Stedelijk is responsible to the alderman in charge of the arts of the city of Amsterdam, but the latter takes care only of the financial matters relating to the budget granted by the city. The choice of acquisitions and exhibitions comes entirely from the director and the curators of the museum. "It is essential to have a competent scientific staff and that in many areas. The head of the section of the arts is an architect. The curator of the collection of prints once had a commercial gallery. Their experience is valuable to us." Director de Wilde would not endure, he says, the state of dependence, in which the directors and the curators of American (and Canadian) museums are confined. "The trustees are, in general, collectors who have too much money and want to meddle in everything. Often, they know nothing of art and still less of the problems of museums. The director or curator is their employee; in case of disagreement, he is dismissed."

Mr. de Wilde attributes the great success of the Stedelijk Museum to the continuity of its policy. "Solo exhibitions, however good they may be, can not suffice. The public is slow to learn; especially at the beginning. It is necessary to have a sustained policy, the results will make themselves felt after a few years. We use all the publicity possible, with poor results. One percent of our public comes thanks to advertising on the radio, three percent thanks to that on television. For important exhibitions, we advertise in the cinemas:" "Much too many people, even artists, are still obsessed by the idea of a centre. The rôle of New York is more or less ended. Today, artists travel. The great names like Oldenburg or Dine move about at their own expense, the others thanks to grants. It is for the museum to go and get them before they become untouchables."

The purchasing policy is centred in a concrete way on art subsequent to 1960. "We have gaps, but it can't be helped, because it is too late. It would take my whole budget and, at the end of ten years, it would be necessary to pay too dear for what we had neglected. There is no good collection chosen by a committee. A collection is not a bringing together of good things. It needs a soul." The result is all contemporary art, European and American, bought during the good time — in 1971 — Mertz, Neuman, Négrêt, Monzoni, Miordag Dado, Newman, Spoerri, Dubuffet, Morris Louis, Kienholz, Tinguely, in 1967-68, for example — Arman, Kelly, Newman, Stella, Oldenburg, Noland, Dorazio, Raynaud, De Kooning, etc.

"Without the acceptance of the artist, without his moral support, nothing can be done. There is no other solution but to be on the side of the creator against all the authorities of the world, against the public, if it is necessary: It is for the latter to adapt itself!", E. de Wilde tells us in ending(1).

(Translation by Mildred Grand)

(1) This article follows an interview with the director of the Stedelijk Museum, E. de Wilde and the author in 1971 and also recent information sent by the same museum.

THE KRÖLLER-MÜLLER MUSEUM AT OTTERLO

By Françoise LeGRIS

The history of the formation of certain collections of works of art and of the founding of some museums is thrilling provided that one is willing to spend a little time on it. A good example of this is offered to us by the Kröller-Müller Museum at Otterlo, in Holland, known especially for its famous collection of Van Goghs (272 works).
Founded by Mrs. Hélène Kröller-Müller, this museum, located in the Hooge Veluwe National Park, is one of the most attractive in the country, by reason of its completely modern design, its geographical situation and its collections. And it truly vindicates the excellence and the very high reputation of Dutch museums. Closed for a year to allow the installation of air-conditioning and the addition of a new section, the museum reopened its doors in February 1971. Let us briefly review the history of the collection.

In May 1888, Hélène Müller married Anthony G. Kröller, an eminent Dutch businesswoman who was to exert a great influence on the affairs of his country. In 1900, the Kröller-Müller family established itself in the forest of Scheveningen where Mrs. Kröller began her collection, composed at that time exclusively of Delft blues.


From this moment, preference was given to works of painting, but sculptures, drawings and engravings were also chosen by Mrs. Kröller. The period from 1909 to 1921 was the one of the most important acquisitions. For example, in 1912, during a stay in Paris, Mrs. Kröller bought seven pictures and two drawings by Van Gogh in the same day, at the same time as a Seurat and a Signac.

The collection of pictures, formed chiefly until 1921, comprised a variety of works of the nineteenth century representing French Realism from Courbet to the Barbizon School, Impressionism and Vincent Van Gogh, whose works occupy the centre of the collection. Neo-Impressionism illustrated especially by Seurat, Symbolism and New Art, by Redon, Toorop, Thorne Prickler and others, and finally, Cubism, by Picasso, Braque, Léger and Gris.

Next Mrs. Kröller discovered abstract art and acquired pictures by Mondrian and Van der Leck. In this way was set up an exceptional collection of modern and contemporary works of art, which has continued to increase since that time.

Since 1907, Mrs. Kröller had been thinking of bequeathing her collection to her country. To do this, it was necessary to ensure the protection and the conservation of the works by the construction of a museum which would be a certain attraction for the public. For this purpose, Mrs. Kröller bought the land which, in 1935, was going to form the Hooge Veluwe National Park, in the centre of which the museum was erected.

Mrs. Kröller refused the plans of architects Miles van der Rohe and Berlage. After many attempts, she entrusted the building of her museum to the Belgian architect, Henri van de Velde. Mrs. Kröller donated her collection to the state, on condition that it assume the museum. The nucleus of the museum has continued to develop, with the acquisition of works which were to form the sculpture park.

The museum itself, of limited dimensions, is especially well adapted to the presentation of modern works. Very high halls opening one upon the other, overhead lighting, very mobile arrangement and hanging, make it one of the most interesting and the most attractive examples of the modern conception of museums. Further, it was intended to create a continuity between the works of art and surrounding nature, each adding value to the other. From next May 23 to Aug. 26, the Museum of Modern Art in New York will present an exhibition of drawings from the Kröller-Müller Museum. It will comprise more than a hundred works, from Van Gogh to Mondrian, and for the first time America will have the opportunity of becoming acquainted with the wealth and the variety of this collection of the Kröller-Müller Museum. (Translation by Mildred Grand)

THE BOYMANS-VAN BEUNINGEN MUSEUM IN ROTTERDAM

By Andréé PARADIS

The Boymans-Van Beuningen Museum in Rotterdam, magnificently established, since 1935, in an immense building of Dutch brick and dominated by a high square tower, has recently been enlarged. It had escaped the almost total destruction of Rotterdam during the war of 1939. The new wing houses the collections of modern art for which Mme Renilde Hammacher van der Brande, chief curator, is responsible. The inauguration took place during the course of the summer of 1972. The museum is famous for its collections of ancient and modern art. The nucleus comes from an important legacy, that of Judge Otto Boymans, who died in Utrecht in 1847, constantly enriched after that, and from the acquisition, in 1958, of the famous collection of D. G. van Beuningen.

The extension of the museum, foreseen in the plans made for the first building by architect A. van der Steur, was largely followed by his successor and former associate, architect A. van der Velde. The demands of contemporary art undergoing perpetual transformation have been respected. Vast halls, free of fixed structures, can be adapted very easily and in very little time to all kinds of exhibitions. The moveable wall allows a great variety of arrangement. Two storeys, a basement, the maximum use of space and elements, such as the beautiful Westersingel gardens, behind the museum, the integration of all services, assure a harmonious functioning.

Another characteristic trait of the contemporary quality of the building: the opening toward the street. The large glass galleries of the Mothenereserlaan façade invite the participation of the public and urge its presence in the interior. The same care at the top of the tower: lights indicate the evenings when the museum is open.

The collections of modern art, of great richness, seem with Information on the Dutch and world artistic movement from the end of the nineteenth century to our time. A dynamic policy concerning exhibitions is in force. During the course of the last years, a few to remember: the great retrospectives of Dali, Man Ray, Delvaux.

As for the amateurs of ancient art, there are many who come to consult the documents concerning, for example, Jérôme Bosch, which are of the highest order. Others prefer the works of the Siècle d’or or the most important collection of Rubens’ sketches in Holland, without ignoring the remarkable collection of prints and drawings, in which are to be found most of the former Koenigs collection by D. G. van Beuningen, patron of the arts. We must also mention the collections of ancient and modern sculptures, as well as those of ceramics, glassware, silver, pewter, lace and furniture. In brief, the Boymans-Van Beuningen Museum: a museum which preserves, admirably, but at the same time an open museum, on the look-out for all new expressions of some significance, as alive as Renilde Hammacher, a chief curator who knows how to polarize so many abilities and so much enthusiasm around the art of today.

(Translation by Mildred Grand)