Le premier venu...et les autres
First Comers...and Others
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LE PREMIER VENU ... ET LES AUTRES.

Il est indéniable, si l'on croit vivre en démocratie, que la culture, y compris la contre-culture et la nouvelle culture, comptent parmi les droits fondamentaux. Réduire la démocratie à ses traits essentiels, c'est établir le rapport de l'individu à l'État. En démocratie, l'individu vaut mieux que l'État. La Société est faite pour l'homme et non l'homme pour la Société. L'État doit mettre à la portée de toute personne qui tombe sous sa juridiction, en quelque lieu qu'elle se trouve, les outils éducatifs, culturels ou autres, nécessaires à son bonheur et à son épanouissement.

La démocratie s'oppose au racisme, au régime totalitaire; elle croit en une «étrange qualité de l'homme», à sa poésie, à son mystère. Une démocratie digne de ce nom admet que les hommes non seulement naissent et vivent égaux mais qu'ils soient capables de singularité. Elle favorise leur propre choix de vie dans un régime qui contient des modes d'action souples et variés.

La démocratie va loin dans le respect de l'homme; en retour, elle attend que l'homme aille loin dans le sens de la responsabilité, de la solidarité, «pour elle l'homme vaut par ce qu'il a de naturel, d'immédiat, de naïf plutôt que par ce qu'il acquiert». Elle lui donne les moyens d'acquérir, mais n'impose pas le grand savoir. Le premier venu vit dans un processus de culture aussi bien que le savant ou l'artiste, avec cette différence qu'en général, il ne le sait pas. Tenter de l'en convaincre, lui parler de son acquis réel, risque de le frustrer momentanément, mais le lent cheminement d'une civilisation ne se fait pas autrement. On a tellement galvaudé la notion de culture, qui est avant tout un état d'esprit, une attitude de la pensée et des sens, on l'a tellement confondue avec les outils culturels présentés comme privilèges des élites, qu'il ne faut pas s'étonner d'assister à une levée de boucliers contre la culture. Le phénomène est international; il est toutefois plus vivace, plus agressif dans les pays jeunes qui ont peu de culture traditionnelle.

Dans cet affrontement de la contre-culture et de la nouvelle culture avec la culture traditionnelle fermentent des bouillons de «création». Cette nouvelle phase-action semble aller du côté de l'engagement et de la prise de conscience. Il reste aux esprits justes à développer des pensées exactes! Il reste aussi à améliorer sans relâche la qualité du milieu ambiant.

Andrée PARADIS

English Translation, p. 73
There is no more profound reason for confronting canvas than responding to Desire, to the necessity of the lofty music of the human being. If we wish to convince ourselves of this, the single work Apollon (1974) would be enough to seize our gaze. One cannot follow a trail without giddiness. Jérôme plunges us right into a labyrinth. He captures visible light to abandon us to invisible light. The great black resonance permeates us. The Novelistian night resounds like a summons. The earthly tissue of greenery, of solid brown, of love dense as a high vintage wine, of traces of fine blue, can only prepare the eye for the illuminating passage from gray to bold white, and what a violent vibration this is! but in order the eye should go, bewildered, into the abyss that black opens. Reversing a remark by Dufy, one might say that there are black backgrounds, equal in value to absolute white. But we come too late, friend. Yes, the gods live. But up that stairway tormented in the heart of another world." (Hoelderlin). When he superimposes labyrinths, Jérôme sweeps us along into the elsewhere of the gods.

Fundamentally, Jean-Paul Jérôme is a painter of communication. In this sense, there is no sensibility more modern. When he paints he demonstrates the organized. In each part of the picture, he conceives vertical zones joined beyond the limits of canvas had not yet been crossed. From Sequences de ciel, the curtain of linen is abandoned. Forms are carried from one space to the other, are subduced or explode. We would see in Grimpuers (dip-tuch), a stroke travel through the four parts of the panel on the right. And in Matin de lumière, the line of the weave becomes a trail that crosses the voiles and the central panel, distributes the space, balances the spheres. In the more recent works (Matin de lumière and others) spheres slide in the half light, as if veiled by a membrane of dull light. Thus, after the explosion of forms in Le Jardin de la licorne and in the andantino of Sonata for Piano in A, in Musique pour Neige, who is more of an artist? the painter or the guardian. The music of Jérôme is more of a universal melody, a melody in Musique pour Neige, what courtesy toward the feminine enclosed in this canvas. (Schubert accompanies it with his wounded heart in the andantino of Sonata for Piano in A major). But the gods live, and what a violent vibration this is! but in order the eye should go, bewildered, into the abyss that black opens. Reversing a remark by Dufy, one might say that there are black backgrounds, equal in value to absolute white. But we come too late, friend. Yes, the gods live. But up that stairway tormented in the heart of another world." (Hoelderlin). When he superimposes labyrinths, Jérôme sweeps us along into the elsewhere of the gods.

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