Une topologie mentale de l’objet
A Mental Topology of the Subject

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Une topologie mentale de l’objet

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L’été dernier, j’ai rencontré Jocelyne Alloucherie dans son atelier de l’avenue Charles, à Québec. Voici quel fut notre entretien.

Jocelyne Alloucherie – Ce n’est jamais vraiment du pur dessin ... de la pure sculpture ... Ce n’est jamais vraiment de la peinture ... Un objet me suggère un dessin, une surface; on peut me ramener à l’objet encore. Je ne n’essaie pas de me situer dans les définitions traditionnelles de peinture, de sculpture, de dessin; c’est la notion de lieu qui m’intéresse, le plein espace, multidirectionnel et signifiant à des degrés divers; c’est pourquoi je veux rester ouverte et disponible à toutes ses conventions. Par l’esprit, du moins, mon activité rejoint l’architecture, une certaine définition de l’architecture.

Pierre Hamelin – Et l’art, en général, en tant qu’activité qu’en pensez-vous?

J.A. – Une manière d’appréhender la réalité, d’en retirer une connaissance et d’en témoigner. C’est le terme connaissance qui prend ici un sens beaucoup plus grand; il contient le désir de transgresser les schémas préexistants et l’aspiration au prodige. La réalité ... Il s’agit d’une réalité qui a la qualité du rêve. Mieux vaudrait dire la surréalité.

P.H. – N’approche-t-on pas alors de la notion de science?

J.A. – Connaissance, science, savoir ... À l’origine, ars signifiit science.

P.H. – Revenons à vos travaux; comment se développent-ils?

J.A. – Il m’arrive de m’étonner devant la structure de certains éléments naturels; remarquez que je ne suis pas la première. Généralement, ce sont des pierres dont je révèle une qualité que j’intègre à un système d’organisation artificielle. Ce premier système de transition n’est jamais vraiment abstrait; sa structure dépend des propriétés inhérentes à l’objet. Sur cette seconde nature, s’élaborent des retranscriptions diverses; un modèle, un modèle ...

P.H. – Est-ce que ce serait des variations d’un même objet?


P.H. – Nous sommes loin de la stylisation. Est-ce que cela ne touche pas à la transformation esthétique de Théo van Doesburg ou des néo-plasticiens?


P.H. – Je constate dans vos travaux un aspect farouche, sauvage, comme si vous vouliez approfondir le réel. Seriez-vous attirée par un certain primitivisme?

J.A. – Plutôt une tentative pour une manière d’être plus fondamentale; une volonté de rompre la dissociation objet-sujet.

P.H. – Comme lorsque le primitif porte le masque de l’animal, il devient, il est l’animal.

J.A. – C’est en ce sens que je dis que l’artificiel rejoint le naturel. Dans le théâtre nô, c’est cette qualité globale qui est recherchée par le comédien.

P.H. – J’ai remarqué que vous démontiez vos pièces et que vous les reconstituez en tenant compte du lieu, de l’espace. Vos objets ne sont pas fixes, leur arrangement peut varier.

1. Sans titre.
   (Phot. Jean Payette)

2. Sans titre.
   (Phot. Jean Payette)

3. Jocelyne ALLOUCHERIE
   Environnement.
   (Phot. Musée du Québec)

English Translation, p. 105
forms of activity are more centred on the collective good than on that of the individual.

From the point of view of urban form, each building should first serve the urban ensemble, just as from the point of view of social form, each individual should first act for the good of the ensemble, thanks to a much stronger social conscience, in more appropriate political-economic structures.

(Translation by Mildred Grand)

THE REMAKING OF A WARD

By Reynald and Reny GADOURY

Reynald and Reny Gadoury describe the development of the Saint-Jean-Baptiste ward and suggests means of giving this part of the city back to its inhabitants. It was in this ward that the communal engraving workshop, L'Atelier de Réalisations Graphiques, was established; it is here also that Comme Gallery has just moved; and a theatre has its creative studios in this ward.

The modern city, that of bungalows, shopping centres, industrial parks, highways and big complexes, leaves little room for the local life of the district. Time, which mellowed Old Quebec and the suburbs of Saint-Jean-Baptiste, Saint-Roch and Saint-Sauveur, no longer has the same rhythm. The models that shaped Limoulo and Montcalm wards are no longer to be found in the Sainte-Foy or Charlesbourg suburbs. The new order has dictated the final solution to this old heart of Quebec: an enormous administrative block in Upper Town, a commercial zone in Lower Town, an historical sector for tourists, and highways to tie it all together. So Quebec's centre will now have to exist like modern style cities. However, the diversity of milieus is an original characteristic of this city. Everything is to be found here, including the richness of architecture. We ought, therefore, to expect that this wealth should be preserved for the well-being of the citizens, and that the ward should be remodelled.

One ward of Quebec, the Saint-Jean-Baptiste, had 25,000 inhabitants a few years ago. At its centre, it contained a virus, indeed a cancer, a real illness. Charlesman and mandarins then did their work. Parliament Hill was attacked as gangrene. Great destruction took place: 1200 dwellings destroyed, connecting roads, office buildings, hotels, luxury apartments, parking lots added. Then, all around, there was to be seen decay, criminal arson and the insecurity of the streets. The new order is creating a deserted city. The Saint-Jean-Baptiste ward was one of the first to suffer from this phenomenon.

The ward's fabric of life must be reinvented and services must be allowed to be set up in the residential area and bring to it an activity of work, of interest in work and daily life, a rhythm appropriate to people disturbed in their space, their mood, their season, their movement, in order that they stand fast and do what they must.

It is necessary to reinvent the suburb's range of activities by complementary equipment, rejuvenated equipment, to keep and increase the number of families in the ward, to allow senior citizens to live out their time in their milieu among the things they love. The saint-jean-baptiste ward should be preserved for the well-being of the citizens, and that the ward should be remodelled.

The city administration ought also to institute renovation that would go on slowly in the wards. This should allow the residents to repair, improve, recondition their homes and their environment through aid and encouragement programmes continued with the same alacrity as this administration shows each year in collecting the taxes of these rate-payers. They should avoid acting mechanically, in separate cases, and spending considerable sums distributed indiscriminately on buildings. They should make interventions on the scale of the ward and gradually solve the serious problems of the deterioration of the environment by planning a programme of renovation of electrical systems, a programme of renovation of heating systems, a programme of renewal of commercial and exterior walls, a programme of renovation and improvement of back yards, emergency staircases and sheds, a programme for the repairing of roads and sidewalks, a programme that would solve the problem of electric power and telephone lines.

Renaissance ought also to be carried on in experiments where the ends of streets would be closed off to return them to pedestrians and to nature. Where unessential traffic would be slowed, turned away and discouraged, where spaces would be animated by sand or greenery, where walls and back yards would be revitalized by colour, where bicycle trails and pedestrian sidewalks would be created, all these being experiments in renovation which would become creation and the administrator, an inventor.

(Translation by Mildred Grand)

A MENTAL TOPOLOGY OF THE OBJECT

By Pierre HAMELIN

Last year I visited Jocelyne Alloucherie in her studio on Charles Ave. in Quebec. Our interview follows:

Jocelyne Alloucherie – It is never really pure drawing, ... pure sculpture, ... It is never really painting, ... An object suggests a drawing, to me, a surface; I can be brought back to the object again. I don't try to locate myself in traditional definitions of painting, sculpture, drawing; it is the idea of place that interests me, the full space, multidirectional and significant to different degrees; that is why I wish to remain open and available to all its conventions. In spirit, at least, my activity is related to architecture, a certain definition of architecture.

Pierre Hamelin – What do you think of art in general as activity?

J.A. – A way of seizing reality, of drawing knowledge from it and of expressing it. It is the term "knowledge" that takes on a much greater meaning here; it contains the desire to contravene pre-existing ideas and the aspiration to the extraordinary. Reality ... It is a matter of a reality that has the quality of a dream. One might better say surrealism.

P.H. – Surrealism, according to André Breton?

J.A. – No, according to me! Through subjectivity and beyond. Can we really know now the sense in which Breton understood it? The dramatic part of this is that there is history; chance too, paradoxically. What would we be without...
The first works to which Michel Champagne devoted himself from 1957 come out of chromatic and structural principles which would later establish the origin of his work. Thus the ink he created from 1960 to 1962 are still-lifes, simple vases set on a horizontal surface that the flowers interrupt, since they soar upward then cutting the centre by the vertical lines they subtend. From 1962 to 1965 he would expand the subject of still-lifes to fruits, to jugs and to various objects in a composition without any other matter but a surface that simulated depth and the structure of the elements and the coherence of forces that balance according to planes governed by a spontaneous trajectory; the work consists of an idea and a perception of significance. The outlines of paint and the sand painted white are covered with colours mixed with a varnish superimposed with an intersecting fluidity, as if the texture brought the contours into being as the eye receives the light.

The most productive period, however, is the one from 1970 to 1975. Champagne’s writing building up from a diversification of colours and non-colours, of small and large flat tints which are freed according to their arrangement, shaped into the aesthetic transformation of Théo van Doesburg or the neoplasticians. J.A.- Van Doesburg? Mechanical and linear. I see in your works a fierce, savage aspect, as if you wished to tame reality. Are you attracted by a certain primitivism?

J.A.- I think it is a quest toward a way of being more fundamental; a wish to disrupt the object-subject dissociation.

P.H.- As when the primitive wears the mask of the animal, it becomes, it is the animal.

J.A.- It is in this sense that I say the artificial catches up with the natural. In the N5 theatre, it is this inclusive quality that is sought by the comic.

P.H.- I have noticed that you dismantled your works and set them up again with attention to place and space. Your objects are not fixed; their arrangement can vary.

J.A.- I think first of art in terms of place rather than in terms of object. A physical and mental space and not the object that must first, at all costs, be renewed incessantly. One fails quickly into gadgetry. It is the object-subject relationship that must be recreated; afterwards, forms regenerate by themselves.

(Translation by Mildred Grand)

MICHEL CHAMPAGNE

By Jean TOURANGEAU

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