EDITORIAL
By André PARADIS

Our hundredth issue proposes to reflect the spirit of celebration produced by the duration of an experience and its fidelity to original objectives.

In the first issue, which appeared in January-February 1956, the body of editors, conscious of "the profound renaissance that is affecting not only the world of forms and colours but also and particularly the very spirit of the work of art", undertook to sustain, to foster the expansion of this climate that was in reality more revolutionary than renaissance. This they hoped to do by establishing through the means of an art magazine a close contact between artists and the public; that is, between the producers and the consumers of the artistic object. This appropriately cultural rôle that Vie des Arts intended to play was directed toward all the elements of human culture. Gérard Morisset, the first director of the publication, conceived it in this way at the beginning: "Our magazine, therefore, will essentially be an organ of information, as wide and as complete as possible. All the artistic disciplines will have their part in it, those of the past as well as those of the present. Current trends will be the object of a careful and impartial study; because Vie des Arts is in no way directed against any group of artists but, rather, toward a greater comprehension of art. At the time when the rift is being widened between a certain art that is legitimate and a certain public which asks only to understand but does not always have the power to do so, it is not the moment for a more or less fruitless quarrel but, instead, for educational action. To make the work of art understood, to make it felt".

This was our line of conduct during the last quarter of the century, when we tried above all to adapt ourselves to the conditions of the technical system that defines our societies and that imposes on an art magazine the duty of being the mirror of modernity. There remains the liberty of confronting this modernity and re-establishing balances while attempting to escape the limits of an extremist intellectualization, responsible for varied orientations of the ways of creation. Among our functions is that of explaining the phenomenon of the past as well as those of the present. Current trends will be the object of a careful and impartial study; because Vie des Arts is in no way directed against any group of artists but, rather, toward a greater comprehension of art. At the time when the rift is being widened between a certain art that is legitimate and a certain public which asks only to understand but does not always have the power to do so, it is not the moment for a more or less fruitless quarrel but, instead, for educational action. To make the work of art understood, to make it felt!

In conclusion, as prelude to the many events that will mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of Vie des Arts in 1981, we are happy to announce the recent publication of the Index of the magazine for the years 1966-1976. A long and exacting labour undertaken by our colleague, Jules Bazin, this instrument of work will certainly be of use to the researchers who have impatiently been waiting for it. This Index casts light on the inventory of artistic activity that the magazine has produced in a decade.

One may wonder, "What next after the hundredth?" The same care, a ceaseless effort toward a better understanding of the creative experience and the most thorough vigilance in order not to allow to pass unnoticed the artist of to-day or of to-morrow for whom meaning is again linked to an idea of value.

(Translation by Mildred Brand)
beginning of the series. This is an attachment to everyday life, the couples and the singles, youth and age, unknown people with no public myths except what the photographs bring to the viewer.

The first sequence of large black and white portrait shows straightforwardness. But if the photographs are contextual, informative and encourage energetic involvement, the second group of portraits are more aggressive, confronting the viewer with life-size faces, mirror images minutely detailed. In the short introduction to the exhibition, Sziási mentions that these people are intimate friends, that the images are not definitive portraits of the Individual. True. However, it is a commentary on the moments in time, a moment shared by the photographer and the person photographed, a moment when the subject is aware of the camera and presents a persona to be viewed by others, a moment between two other moments which will never be repeated identically.

Like the double portraits, the organization of the sequence is important. Each photograph contains gentle twists of irony. Two photographs of girls are sandwiched between two heavily painted women with pursed lips and a partially shaven, bared chested miner from Norandas. The contrasts are powerful and unrelenting, reflecting a diversity of human expression. Another type of subtle irony appears in the portrait of Gilbert Marion and his son. Their resemblance is uncanny. Both adhere to the conventional look of the sixties, long hair and jeans. But there is one minor role reversal: the son sports a shirt and tie, the father a tee-shirt.

And finally in this tightly knit group, the portrait of Andor Pasztor, unlike the one in the first segment, but reawakening our memory of the previous image and illustrating the diversity of portraits at different moments in time. Eyes closed, mouth half open in song, he happens to be in front of photo memories although their role is indistinct and indefinite. The most memorable of portraits signals the end of the sequence.

Order and disorder

The next two series, the facades of St. Catherine Street and the architecture of Abitibi, developed as a reaction to the overpopulated environments. St. Catherine Street is the more formally complex, relying on grid systems, flat planes, clarity of detail and light quality. The series starts in the west with the Restaurant Texan and moves through to the eastern part of the city, ending with the full figure image of Théâtre Denise-Pelletier. Although the sequence is linear, the viewer doesn't walk a straight line. As camera distance from the subject changes, an undulating rhythm is established, sometimes moving in on a fragment or pulling back to encompass the entire building. The details call attention to the order (or disorder, as the case may be) of the architectural structure, and to the neon lights, signs or representational drawings signifying commercial content. Framing determines this attention, for through careful selection of detail, the underlying order of the structure is revealed. For example, the facades of the Palace and the two structures divide the frame, thereby setting up a comparison. The tin-ribbed, exterior surface of Supersexe shares the frame equally with the neo-classical columns of the Palace Theatre; sexy neon ladies compete with Clint Eastwood's "Escape from Alcatraz." Absurdities abound.

As one moves east, structures are photographed in their entirety, indicating a distance, an end to the series and establishing a link with the next group of images, all of which are frontal, full figure 'portraits' of indigenous Abitibi architecture. In an historical context, these two architectural series recall the work of Walker Evans, steady in their execution, studied in organization and specific in time and place. In another sense, they parallel the first group of double images. Surface qualities are stressed in the black and white portrait, while the facade is more about the structure. The Abitibi images reveal cultural taste. The phenomenon of painted houses to counteract the long grey winter months and the vast expanse of snow-covered ground is reflected in the attention to colour. Each photo in the series is taken from the same position and distance, minimizing spatial and temporal shifts and accentuating changes in architectural form and colour. They present a sensibility particular to rural Québec.

The effort here has been to analyze Sziási's exhibition, to pay close attention to the structure and to extract a possible understanding of his photographic work. However, this article also reflects a critical stance. Extensive space has been given to the double images because, in my opinion, they are the strongest, most complex and captivating photographs in the exhibition. St. Catherine Street stands on its own as an entity separate from the first and at times exhibits exquisite formal control and beauty. The large portraits and Abitibi photos, however, seem subordinate, amplifying ideas which have already been initiated and explored in the exhibition and elsewhere. This does not mean that the exhibition suffers severely, but simply that there are relatively weaker points, given the strength and magnitude of many photographs.

TWO VERSIONS OF MOSES BY HENDRICK DE CLERCK

By Myra Nan ROSENFELD

The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts has recently been given an important seventeenth century Flemish painting, Moses Striking the Rock at Mara, by Hendrick de Clerck. This painting rejoins another version of the same subject by De Clerck which was acquired by the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts ten years earlier, in 1969. It is extraordinary for a museum in Canada to own two versions of the same painting by this rare Flemish artist whose works are now preserved mainly in churches and museums in Belgium. There are only twelve securely documented works known by Hendrick de Clerck. These two paintings are extremely interesting, since they were probably executed at different periods in De Clerck's life and thereby give us insight into the development of his style.

Hendrick de Clerck's œuvre is important, since it illustrates the tradition of Flemish late Renaissance mannerism that was to contribute to the development of the art of Peter Paul Rubens (1577-1640). Little is known of De Clerck's life. The places and dates of both his birth and death are unknown. He seems to have been active primarily in Brussels; the very nature of the painting, for example the dated triptych with the Holy Family of St. Ann on the central panel, was executed in 1590 for the Kapellekerk in Brussels.

Modern historians believe that De Clerck was a student of Maarten de Vos (1532-1603). However, it is difficult to assume this, since Karel van Mander, who probably knew De Clerck, did not list him as a student of Maarten de Vos in his Het Schilder-boeck which was published in Amsterdam in 1604. De Vos' mature style is quite different from De Clerck's early style as we can see by comparing the Holy Family of St. Ann by De Vos which is signed and dated 1593 to the above-mentioned 1590 Holy Family of St. Ann by De Clerck. Whereas De Clerck used very sharply defined, crisp triangular drapery folds, De Vos used much more fluid, curvilinear folds. Laureysens has suggested that the two artists collaborated in the late 1590's, since one can find mutual influences in their work.

In fact, in a Holy Family of St. Ann which De Clerck signed and dated in 1611, he has adopted the more fluid drapery folds of De Vos. In 1606, Hendrick de Clerck was appointed court painter to Archduke Albert and Archduchess Isabella in Brussels, just three years before Rubens. It was while he was in the service of the court that De Clerck's œuvre was executed. This painting was signed and dated Jan Brueghel I (1568-1625) and Frans van Aalst (1570-1628) on a series of landscapes with classical figures. De Clerck's last known painting, a Descent from the Cross, was executed in 1628 for the Church of Sts. Peter and Guidon in Anderlecht.

The painting of Moses Striking the Rock at Mara recently donated to the Montreal Museum can be authenticated by a preparatory drawing which Hendrick de Clerck signed with his monogram "HDC" in the Cabinet des dessins of the Louvre. The compositions of the drawing and painting are almost identical. However, in the final painting the figure of Moses has been moved from the middle ground to the background. Thus the focal point of the composition in the painting is not Moses, but a seated woman with two children who looks out at the spectator just left of the centre in the middle ground.

During the years between 1580 and 1620, Flemish painters were very much influenced by Italian art and continued a tradition that goes back to the fifteenth century. Earlier artists such as Hieronymus Bosch (active 1474-1516), Jan Gossaert (active 1505-1532) and Pieter Brueghel the Elder (active 1551-1569) went to Italy. The influence of Michelangelo, Titian and Tintoretto is found in the paintings of Maarten de Vos. Jan Brueghel I, another of De Clerck's collaborators, went for Cardinal Federigo Borromeo, Archbishop of Milan, for several years, between 1592 and 1596. Hendrick de Clerck, like the above artists, was also influenced by Italian art. It has been noted by several art historians that the woman who is the focal point of the composition in the middle ground of the recently donated Moses Striking the Rock at Mara shows the influence of the marble Medusa group by Cellini and the Medusa in the Church of Notre Dame in Bruges in 1501. Other figures in the painting refer to works that De Clerck may have seen in Rome. The reclining woman in the left corner of the composition is a reversed version of the figure of Sappho in Raphael's Parnassus in the Stanza della Segnatura in the Vatican.
We should now consider the relationship between the two versions of Moses Striking The Rock at Mara in the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts. The oblong painting recently donated to the Museum is unusually octagonal and is in fact the octagonal version which is a completely autograph work. This hypothesis would explain why the octagonal version was signed, and the oblong version was not. In 1981, the focal point of the composition is the seated woman with two children to the left of the central axis. The composition of the oblong panel is based on an asymmetrical zigzag which extends from the lower right corner to the woman with the children at the left and up to the woman carrying a jug on her head in the upper right section of the painting. We can see how Hendrick de Clerck had a standard repertory of figures which he repeated often. The woman looking out at the viewer and the two children drinking out of a shell occur in both versions of Moses Striking the Rock at Mara, as well as in the 1590 Holy Family of St. Ann.

The two versions of Moses Striking the Rock at Mara are different in style and thus are most likely different in date. The earlier of the two paintings was acquired in 1699 has Hendrick de Clerck’s monogram “HDC” in the lower right corner. The composition of the two paintings is different. Moses is the focal point of the composition in the octagonal painting. He is placed securely in the middle ground just to the left of the central axis. De Clerck has placed the figures along diagonals which cross in the centre just next to Moses. This central axis is further emphasized by across diagonal of the drinking woman coming right out of a shell in the foreground. In the oblong panel, Moses is located in the background, off centre. As noted above, the focal point of the composition is the seated woman with two children to the left of the central axis. The composition of the oblong panel is based on an asymmetrical zigzag which extends from the lower right corner to the woman with the children at the left and up to the woman carrying a jug on her head in the upper right section of the painting. We can see how Hendrick de Clerck had a standard repertory of figures which he repeated often. The woman looking out at the viewer and the two children drinking out of a shell occur in both versions of Moses Striking the Rock at Mara, as well as in the 1590 Holy Family of St. Ann.

Thus, the two versions of Moses Striking the Rock at Mara in the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts by Hendrick de Clerck give us an opportunity to evaluate the development of the career of this rare but important artist.
Picasso jokes are replaced now by the Beuys jokes. Any work by Beuys when reproduced out of context looks bizarre, even irrational; any journalistic word-by-word account of his performance pieces reads like the scenario for a play whose drama is to be found not in the text but in the role of the performer and the reactions of the audience. The direct physical confrontation between viewer and object creates a unique rapport. Fat, felt, fur and leather or malleable stuff like industrial blanket- ing and felt produce predictable reactions and Beuys' initial intention was to use it in order to provoke the shock effect as a base for discussion about the potential of sculpture and culture: what does it mean, what is it all about and how does it relate to language? What are production and creation? In fact, the artist challenges the public to ask the archetypal question which every child throughout the history of mankind has asked: "What are you doing, mister?"

Fat in itself is a banal and perishable substance, not associated with art (except for the culinary arts and the butter sculptures built by cordon-bleu chefs) and in Beuys' hands it becomes the "Social Sculpture". He uses it to give shape to intended forms; he uses it for "anti-image" purposes. In fact, the artist challenges the public to ask the archetypal question which every child throughout the history of mankind has asked: "What are you doing, mister?"

Through an anti-image he offers an entry into a transcendental and intrinsic bond between owner and originator. Antenna, memory prop, glass and LP records. These multiples are essentially fetish objects which are used to create an emotional distance that allows a self-reflexive perception of the medium. Through an anti-image he offers an entry into a transcendental and intrinsic bond between owner and originator. Antenna, memory prop, glass and LP records. These multiples are essentially fetish objects which are used to create an emotional distance that allows a self-reflexive perception of the medium.

"The Pack" was a modular art piece that consisted of a rolled up blanket, flashlight and a lump of fat. It was used by Beuys when he was stationed in southern Russia, the Ukraine and the Crimea, and it was in that region that his plane crashed, hit by Russian ground fire. Beuys survived this incident, and the story of his survival became a central theme in his work. The piece was a symbol of survival, and it became associated with the idea of "the Pack," which referred to the nomadic lifestyle of the people who lived in those regions.

Now the catalogue raissonné of his collectibles is published in book form. Unlike Andy Warhol in the United States, Beuys isn't concerned with creating stunning and colorful mass-market art. His multiples are essentially fetish objects, that is, works of art that are not intended to be viewed as art but rather as objects with a specific function. Beuys' philosophy goes beyond what he calls the "little pseudocultural ghetto" of the art world. Through an anti-image he offers an entry into a transcendental and spiritual world which is implied but not given as a visual sensation.

In the middle '60s prominent theologians in Europe began to take the nature of Beuys' ritualistic approach to creation very seriously and saw in his transubstantiation process the symbolic revelation of the Eucharist. (The artist's own religious feelings are outlined in the text and interview of the 1979 catalogue "Traces in Italy" published by the Kunstmuseum Lucerne, Switzerland. Not yet translated from its orginal German.)

It is regrettable that Beuys' work and genuine feeling for life are overlooked in the effort of understanding his work intellectually. The quality of his wit tends to get lost in the translating and editing of his interviews into other languages. His sense of humor and occasional self-parody runs like an undercurrent through anything he does. His use of fat, for instance, also implies a pun in the direction of the way in which "fat" is used in language, a joke which isn't shared by the fastidiously clean visitor who happens to wander through a museum and discovers the corners in a gallery thickly padded with fat.

Beuys' philosophy goes beyond what he calls the "little pseudocultural ghetto" of the art world. Though he stresses his lack of interest in the manipulation of the art market, there is also no recorded objection from him that at least one big American conglomerate corporation collects his major sculptural works.

His dealer René Block was able, after much persuading, to win him over to the idea of the "multiple" which began to find popular appeal fourteen years ago. Beuys made his first "usable" multiples in 1968, which were to include the "Evervess Club Soda" bottles with water you might like to drink; the "Sled" which can be used in wintertime; and the "intuition" box with pencil line and handwritten addition, of which more than 10,000 have been sold since. The sled was also used as a component in the humorous installation piece "The Pass." Between 1963 and 1968, Beuys' works were shown pouring out of the rear end of a Volkswagen bus, each one with its survival kit of rolled up blanket, flashlight and a lump of fat.

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In the area of the chosen symbol and the implied symbolism of its representation in Beuys' work verbal information becomes important. The artist's personal interpretation of his symbols differs from a wide range of other possible interpretations and associations the viewer may be familiar with. The frames of reference are uniquely the artist's own and correspond to the sum total of his own past which left an indelible mark not only on Beuys the artist, but on a whole generation of his contemporaries. If he is referred to as a shaman, a high priest, a messiah, a guru, a revolutionary, a counter-revolutionary, an existentialist, or a political moralist, this is all as a political moralist. In order to understand his uniqueness it is necessary to know some biographical details about his life and the circumstances which brought him to his present place in the world.

Joseph Beuys was born on May 12th, 1921 in Krefeld near Düsseldorf. He grew up in Kleve (or Cleves) close to the Dutch border. The land is flat and has been a historic battleground for many centuries. From the Romans to Napoleon and to the Second World War; from Henry VIII who married Anne of Cleves for political reasons to Richard Wagner who based his opera "Lohengrin" on the massive castle "Schwanenburg" in Cleves, the region is permeated with legend, myth and local superstition.

Beuys grew up among hardworking people who had little time for art and higher politics. His family ran a flour and fodder business. They were strict Catholics and Joseph was their only child. Left very much on his own he developed early a great interest in botany and in literature, particularly Nordic history and mythology which were to lead him later to the Scandinavian writers and philosophers. Like any child growing up during the depression years he felt his parents' worries but could not share them. He began to think of himself as an outsider at home and at school. Like everyone else he joined the Hitler Youth and dreamt about a future dedicated to studies in medicine or the natural sciences. In his autobiographical references, childhood and adolescent recollections become a key to understanding his later work and the iconography of his symbols.

In 1940 the nineteen-year old Beuys joined the Luftwaffe and was trained first as a radio operator, then as a dive bomber pilot. He was stationed in southern Russia, the Ukraine and the Crimea and it was in that region that his plane crashed, hit by Russian anti-aircraft fire. He was saved by a tribe of Tartar herdsmen who discovered him among the wreckage of his Ju 87 and applied the first aid care still practised in primitive northern settlements — the covering of the patient's body thickly with animal fat before wrapping it in blankets to keep warm near the fire. Beuys slowly regained consciousness and later after a long ride in a cart showing up out of the rear of a Volkswagen bus, each one with its survival kit of rolled up blanket, flashlight and a lump of fat.
The wartime experience as a collective trauma of mass manipulation of people and human rights left him with a lasting mistrust of authority, bureaucratic power and political manoeuvring. He returned to Kleve from a British prisoner-of-war camp at Cuxhaven in 1946. Encouraged by his family and friends in the arts, he began to study sculpture as well as scientific subjects. The first manifestation of his success as a maker of religious images were roughly carved gravestones from '49 until '51.

A new future was gradually opening up for him and with it the growing awareness of a freedom in the arts, freedom as a primary condition for the expression of thoughts and concepts which could not be communicated in any other way. He entered the Düsseldorf Academy as a student. In 1961 he was appointed professor of sculpture at the same institution. In 1972 he was dismissed from this position. The main reason was Beuys' disregard for the "numeratus" (exclusive) and a clause of national law. His class totalled over 400 students, 142 of whom had been rejected by other faculty members. Beuys started legal proceedings against the Ministry which lasted for years and became a cause célèbre in Germany. His position was clear and firm: if there are those who wish to learn and those who wish to teach, then the State acts repressively if it prevents them coming together. (German education has to apply to several academies before he might, with luck, gain entry.)

The work of Beuys in the '70s is heavily influenced by this battle with bureaucracy. He was supported by his students who held demonstrations, initiated strike actions, and brought their work to the entrance of the Düsseldorf Academy where Beuys held seminars in the street. In 1976 he finally was approved in an initial appeal. Though his teaching contract ceased to exist, he regained the use of his studio at the Academy and he is authorized to continue to hold the title of Professor.

In the spring of '73 the first steps towards the founding of a Union for the advancement of a "Free International College for Creativity and Interdisciplinary Research" were taken and Beuys proposed himself as its "founding rector." The first salaries afforded (Free International University) was given in a manifesto drawn up by Beuys and the Nobel Prizewinning writer Heinrich Boell as a co-founder in '72. For Canadians who are not familiar with the post-war development of Germany the following extract from his manifesto might help to make the setting clear: "... The founders of the school proceed from the knowledge that since 1945, along with the brutality of the reconstruction period, the gross privileges afforded by monetary reforms, and crude accumulation of possessions and an upbringing resulting in an expense-account mentality, many insights and initiatives have been prematurely shattered. The realistic attitude of those who do survive, the idea that living might be the purpose of existence, has been denounced as a romantic fallacy. The Nazi's "Blood and Soil" doctrine, which ravaged land and spilled blood, has disturbed our relation to tradition and environment. Now, however, it is no longer regarded as romantic but exceedingly realistic to fight for every tree, every plot of undeveloped land, every stream as yet unpoisoned, every old town centre, and against every thoughtless reconstruction scheme. And it is no longer considered romantic to speak of nature. In the permanent trade competition and performance rivalry of the two German political systems which have successfully exerted themselves for recognition, the values for life have been lost."... This is the voice of a generation who went through the traumatic experience of a nation turned from political fanaticism to aggressive denial of guilt, and went on to replace the lost spiritual values with out-and-out materialistic greed.

Düsseldorf today, with its Kunsthalle, its stick galleries, its modern Art Academy and the wealthy art patrons represents one of the monuments to the "economy miracle" in this sector of the Rheinland, the Ruhr mining valley. It is difficult at present to recall that in this capital of the richest territory in the Federal Republic in the immediate post-war period, you could pay for admission to a theater with a lump of coal. The phenomenon of Düsseldorf would never have happened without the dynamic contribution of its artists. Without them it would in all probability have become just like any other prosperous industrial city in Europe.

If Düsseldorf's artists in the 19th century exerted a great influence on American landscape painting in the Hudson River region, their activities in our time again connected with the American art world sooner or later. For the end of World War II, but this time they did not emigrate to do so. Instead of falling into the academic stagnation which trapped the British art scene during that period, they turned to techniques by which new artistic concepts could be realized. Structural problems replaced concerns for compositions. The man-nature-technology relationship had to be updated. The question of urban problems, sociological processes and the threat of an upsurge of materialism became urgent. Germany became suddenly the place where such experiments could be conducted and the Americans were quick to realize its potential. Artists like Rauschenberg, Oldenburg, Kline, Morris, Brecht among others came. Influential groups like "Zero" and "Fluxus" spread a network of international contacts among artists working in the fields of conceptual and performance art. The Happening grew simultaneously with Neo-Dada, minimal art and, in Italy, "arte povera." Art outside the aims of the "finished" object became an instrument for expressing the stark need in the electric age to come to grips with the implied prophecies for the future. The consistency in Beuys' conduct throughout these periods becomes increasingly important because, in his career, it is now possible to trace the step-by-step development of such art. It is the artist's personal pursuits which makes them unique and relevant to our time.

Any artist who outgrows the local esoteric circles of devotees and reaches an international audience of people ready to look, listen, debate, accept or reject, carries an enormous weight of responsibility. He has to defend standards and at times refrain from speaking his mind in deference to the sensibilities of others. Supporters and opponents are quick to detect any flaws or deviations in his conduct.

The significance of Beuys' actions affects directly and indirectly the future conduct of artists outside Germany. It isn't a question of success or failure, of a break-through or a fizzling out of the limelight. The question is far more serious: Where are the boundaries today in our western world, for the ideally motivated star of the arts?

Beuys the artist could easily profit from his established reputation and go on indefintely producing works which are eagerly bought up by collectors and museums, feeding the profits into his project for the Free International University. No matter what he does in the future, it cannot diminish the credibility of his past achievements. The artist, activist and political moralist Beuys might eventually reach the stage the late philosopher Bertrand Russell arrived at when he said at the age of eighty-nine: "I must, before I die, find some means of saying the essential thing which is in me, which I have not yet said, a thing which is neither love nor hate nor pity nor scorn but the very breath of life, shining and coming from afar, which will link into human life the immensity, the frightening, wondrous and implacable forces of the non-human."

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