

Translations/Traductions

Yvonne Kirbyson, Lucile Ouimet and Pierre W. Desjardins

Number 57, Winter 1969–1970

URI: <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/58136ac>

[See table of contents](#)

Publisher(s)

La Société La Vie des Arts

ISSN

0042-5435 (print)

1923-3183 (digital)

[Explore this journal](#)

Cite this article

Kirbyson, Y., Ouimet, L. & Desjardins, P. W. (1969). Translations/Traductions. *Vie des arts*, (57), 74–83.

TRANSLATIONS/TRADUCTIONS

The increase in curiosity about the work of art, and the necessity of having the work confront the viewer, are the prime concerns of the organizers of major exhibitions. The exhaustive efforts undertaken for art education must be supported by a policy of bringing the public into contact with works that are worthwhile.

Translation by Yvonne Kirbyson

Editorial

An escalade that should not be disregarded

BY ANDRÉE PARADIS

In examining the sphere of artistic activity, one is struck by the leading role which exhibitions play. The vitality of the relationship between art and the public depends on their functioning in modern life. Whether they are the responsibility of the museum, the commercial gallery, the shopping centre, or, whether they simply assure a permanence of art in the street, to varying degrees, exhibitions are the vehicles of essential information about the works: they establish contact and channel attention to a given point.

At a time when experiments are proliferous, the multiplication of means of information cannot fulfill all needs; certainly not the need to condense surveys, to take stock, to make an evaluation, to analyze orientations and interpret historical trends. One of the functions of the exhibition is to rekindle interest in the works, to enlighten, and enrich sensitivity, to be, in some manner, the living conscience of an art that is constantly being rediscovered.

In the following pages we shall note that almost all of the articles are related to exhibitions. Not limiting us to reviews, our collaborating writers think of these exhibitions as a pretext for reflections or commentaries. Thus, we thought it useful to examine the expedient of the itinerant exhibition of the Canada Council's collection, organized by the National Gallery, to define one of the fundamental policies concerning the assistance given to the artist by the Canada Arts Council. In the same way, the success of recent exhibitions in London, Florence and Paris, of *The National Gallery's Collection of Drawings of the Old Masters* reminds us of the wealth and diversity of the Gallery's Print-room, whose foundation was organized by a former curator, Miss Kathleen Fenwick. European critics spoke of "several spectacular works", "a homogeneous collection", "an important collection". The director of the National Gallery, Miss Jean Sutherland Boggs, intended the exhibition to be an homage to the taste andadroitness of the author of the collection, who has just entered retirement. From Florence, Mario Bucci, and from Paris, Jean-Dominique Rey, communicate their appreciations.

The Stained Glass Window in Our Time, an exhibition presented in Montreal during the summer of 1969 at the French pavilion at Man and His World, and then, in October at the Quebec Museum, permitted Joseph Pichard, the commissioner of the exhibition and the former director of the magazine *Art sacré*, to approach current problems set by the stained glass art.

In the interval of a few days the Art Gallery of Ontario hosted two important international exhibitions. The first, *Sacred and Profane Symbolism in Art*, in the course of 26 days, manifestly enraptured a crowd of 33,000 visitors. Art that is sensual and poetic retains its admirers; relegated to obscurity by impressionism, symbolism is redefined as an important step in the evolution of art. Moreover, the interest aroused by the subsequent exhibition, *Fifty Years of the Bauhaus*, is no less considerable. More rigorous than the preceding exhibition, and admirably documented, this exhibition, assembled under the direction of Mr. Hans W. Wingler, describes an experience that is still one of the keys of modern art. Furthermore, its extensions, more particularly in architecture, provided the material for another part of the exhibition conjointly presented by the Canada Design Centre in Toronto.

The Dubuffet exhibition at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts is a veritable paradox. Dubuffet, who does not care for museums and refuses to go into them, consented, on the other hand, to make an important donation to the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris and authorized a thematic exhibition of his work in Montreal. François Gagnon, a critic opposed to art criticism that harms art, considers the human theme under an intriguing and certainly revealing aspect.

If we continue the examination of the index, we can pick out several names that appeared in various exhibitions during the fall: Miller Brittain, Rita Letendre, the Sixth Paris Biennale, Novak, Canadian Painters at the Gallery of France, New Alchemy at the Museum of Contemporary Art, the Masters of Needlework in Germany at the Athanase-David Pavilion of the CEGEP of Old Montreal, Harold Town, Alex Bertrand, Jean-René Ostiguy, the graphic arts in Burnaby—this testifies to an increasing activity and makes us regret that we are able to examine only a small part of the panorama of the exhibitions which were held in Canada during the last three months.

The Arts Council is collecting . . . why? . . . we ask David Silcox

BY PAQUERETTE VILLENEUVE

In 1966 the Arts Council decided to become a collector. This decision followed the course of action which Peter Dwyer had taken, from the founding of the organization, for the development of art in Canada. By his open-minded attitude, the associate director of the Council, very conscious of the individual needs of artists, attracted by the degree of excellence in experimentation, and able to realize the interests which direct regional distribution, had hoped to give artists the most generous opportunities for fulfillment. The idea for the Canada Council's collection originated from his policy. The putting together of the collection was entrusted to Mr. David Silcox.

In three years the Council bought almost 300 works including 95 paintings, 30 sculptures, and a very large number of prints, water-colours, and drawings. It loaned about 40 prints for an exhibition in the Maritimes in 1968. It also loaned some canvases for the "Canada 101" exhibition in Edinburgh and for "Canada: Art of Today" an important exhibition at the Musée d'Art Moderne in Paris, which did not achieve the hoped-for success, the French critics being rather insensitive to works which were influenced by trends in contemporary American art, and did not step forward from them with a sufficient singularity.

The first major public exhibition of the collection was in September 1969; the National Gallery made a selection of 40 works which, in the course of a two-year itinerary, will visit all the major cities in Canada. "The large sculptures are housed in narrow corridors and the canvases of too large dimensions simply stay in the basement", wrote Ross Woodman in "ArtsCanada" to deplore the treatment being given the acquired works in the Ottawa office. He was exaggerating a little, but in any event, the itinerant exhibition settles the matter for the time being.

What will become of it afterwards? "We are not a museum, so what can we do? Give the collection to a museum? Disperse it into schools, galleries, etc.? Use it as a basis for itinerant international exhibitions? We are not equipped to keep it, thus we should disperse it. We could sell it as a lot and begin again. That is what I would like to do. To us, it is an attempt at patronage; it is the act of buying and not the canvas that matters", Mr. Silcox told us. Brian Fisher, Iain Baxter, Michael Snow, Harold Town, Guido Molinari, Claude Hurlbutise are the luminaries of the collection. What criteria govern the choice of the works?

"We buy the work of living artists. We are interested in those who are in full swing, that is to say that we have not begun with the Group of Seven. The most remarkable thing, to my mind, is that certain artists are represented by half a dozen works; we have, for example, 5 works by Molinari, Fisher, and Baxter. We do not strive to purchase one work of each painter. Our only criterion is quality, which includes a variety of styles, techniques, and methods: hard-edge, pop, realist, traditional."

Mr. Silcox refrains from having preferences but he admits: "If I could take a work, I would choose a little drawing by Joyce Wheelan. Also a drawing by Greg Curnoe, 'Zebra-egg' by Comtois, the collage by Michael Snow, 'The Ladies of the January Jubilee', the 'Culture wall 1961' by Harold Town. I also very much like a large Molinari work from 1964."

He takes all possible precautions to avoid any charge of unfairness. "Most of the purchases are made in close collaboration with a jury, the one that administers competitions for bursaries for further training, and which travels throughout Canada and chooses works which it recommends to the person in charge; but, in the final analysis, I make the decisions; this is to assure continuity. However, I always consult with well-informed people—critics, museum curators."

"Perhaps I am not a completely objective observer", he says, "but our collection represents in a broad sense the preoccupations of Canadian artists."

Personality also plays a part in the choice and it appears that Mr. Silcox's temperament keeps him away from certain forms of expression. It is easy to see that the great American painter Barnett Newman has

left a deep mark on Canadian artists who have studied with him; it would be very difficult to tell that Borduas and automatism have had any influence whatever on Canadian painting. The average age of the automatistic painters is still less venerable than that of the Group of Seven, and one might desire to see throughout the Council's collection a more exact image of the role that these painters have played in jarring conformity in their environment. Is it not from effervescent automatism that Riopelle arose, the only Canadian painter with an international reputation, and the only one of that group present in the collection? Even if "there is no accounting for tastes", this abstinence can appear regrettable.

Especially since the fact that the Council's becoming a collector is exerting an influence in the country. "If what we are told is true, public museums are becoming more aggressive since we have begun to act. What is important is that we have had confidence in Canadian artists and the private collectors have followed suit. In a few cases, we have bought a work just before an exhibition. Then we saw: "Painting purchased by the Canada Council"; that was like a label of quality."

"There is really an abundance of works of art. We know fully well that in ten years perhaps 20-30% of the works we have bought will be good. We cannot predict the future and we make mistakes. But, as Alfred Barr has said: If after ten years you are still left with 30%, that is very good."

In the catalogue of the "Canada 101" exhibition, Mr. Silcox enlightens us about his tastes and his way of seeing things. "Montreal painting—that of Hurtubise, Molinari, and Tousignant is a reaction to the gestural spontaneity of automatism and a step towards conscious structure through colour and composition. It is distinguished by the quality of the surface and the optic effects. It is an art of illusion, strictly controlled by a knowledge of colour theory and its visual effects. It is a decorative art."

At 32, Mr. Silcox is playing a role that is all the more important as he has a dual responsibility. First he administers the budget of the collection. This budget which changes greatly from year to year, is detailed as follows: in 1966, 10,000 dollars; in 1967, 25 thousand; in 1968, 40 thousand; and in 1969, only ten thousand, to which was added the cost of publication of the 5,000 copies of the catalogue of the collection. Moreover, Mr. Silcox is in charge of the section of the Plastic Arts of the Council, which this year has given 350 bursaries to painters. That is three times more than writers receive.

Mr. Silcox received his training in England at the Courtauld Institute in London. Thanks to a Council bursary, he studied history of art there, and he even worked on a dictionary of art. With his almost innocent appearance, and a lock of hair that smartly falls back on his forehead Mr. Silcox is a charming man. Moreover, he knows where he is going. "Wisdom is not the monopoly of older people", he says, and there is no reason to doubt that. It all started for him in Toronto. When he was a student at the University of Toronto, he worked for three years at Hart House, a house for students. At that time there was a programme of cultural animation: concerts, exhibitions, and debates, which he looked after; in particular, he sought to develop the exhibitions. That is where he gained his experience in administration.

The goal of the collection that he is directing today is to help artists by purchases.

"It isn't really a form of assistance, for if a poor artist has urgent needs, we would rather give him a bursary. What we want is to buy the most beautiful works and set an example for other organizations by showing them that there is joy and satisfaction in owning works of art. We do not buy with the idea of making a profit, but in spite of ourselves, the value of our collection has almost doubled."

—When you buy a work, are you looking for innovation at all cost?

Mr. Silcox denies this: "Innovation is always interesting especially among young people who are experimenting. But the most interesting works have come from the studios of Town, Snow, Molinari, Lockhead. They all date back a few years."

—Have you had problems?

"We were the subject of sharp questions in the House of Commons when we purchased the work by Claude Breeze: "Sunday afternoon, taken from an old American photograph 1965", but that did not have any consequences. We have always taken care to consult professionals who guide us in our choice. Thus, the artistic value of the canvases that we buy cannot be contested".

Translation by Yvonne Kirbyson

From Dürer to Picasso

BY MARIO BUCCI

The National Gallery of Canada exhibits its drawings at the Cabinet des Offices in Florence.

In spite of the fact that the founding of Canada's National Gallery took place relatively recently (it dates back only to 1880), that private donations to public collections have traditionally been inconsiderable, and that two world wars inevitably limited acquisitions for years, the Ottawa museum's collection of drawings has become so remarkable that it has merited an invitation to present a choice of its most beautiful works in the Cabinet des dessins et des estampes at the Galerie des Offices. Along with the Cabinet des dessins of the Louvre, and the collections of Albertina of Vienna, Windsor Castle and London's British Museum, the Cabinet des Offices ranks among the most famous museums in the world.

Canadians, so proud of public and private collections of ancient and modern art of the museums in Ottawa, Montreal, and Toronto, should recognize and appreciate the immense effort made in these last years to enrich and complete the collection of drawings of Canada's National Gallery.

From far-off 1911, when the first seventeen drawings were purchased for \$1850, until 1921 (a decisive date in the development of the collection), and from the second world war and the postwar years (very comprehensive acquisitions of modern drawings), until the last ten years during the course of which the collection was enriched by a few works of a particular importance, the formation of this collection was very arduous. However, we should say that from the beginning the Museum was able to acquire drawings of an excellent quality, very well conserved, of unquestionable origin, not only representing various periods or regions but also offering as complete as possible a panorama of particular art periods.

The following directors contributed most actively to the development of the collection: first H. P. Rossiter, who in 1921 instituted the first Cabinet des dessins et gravures d'Ottawa; then, Mrs. Kathleen Fenwick, associate-director, and from 1928, director of the collection, and more recently, Paul Oppé who, from 1937 to 1957, was in charge of acquisitions in England, and who was followed, from 1960 to 1968 by A. E. Popham, an indefatigable scholar, who in 1965 published the *Catalogue of European Drawings*. Finally we must mention the current director, Jean Sutherland Boggs, who made all necessary arrangements for the present exhibition.

Acquisitions have always been handled with a great deal of thought and discipline, in order to obtain from selected groups significant and valuable works of each era, of different cultures, and of different aesthetic movements. The current exhibition adheres to the same idea.

The oldest drawing—which at the same time is the most recent acquisition—is a parchment on which nine famous persons have been represented in pen and watercolour. A work of the first Italian Renaissance, and what is more, Florentine, this precious parchment is related to the medieval tradition of manuscripts, and along with different pages kept in other important collections, is part of a very rare *Universale Chronicle*, which dates from the mid-fifteenth century. From the same century, but this time, from Flanders, we must further mention a drawing attributed to Memling; finely drawn with a silver etching point, it represents *The Virgin and the Infant Jesus surrounded by angel musicians*.

From Florence there are the particularly significant and attractive XVIIth century drawings of a mannered and post Michaelangelo workmanship. The XVIIth century landscape and the Venetian art of the XVIIIth century are also very well represented. Finally a magnificent profile treated in pen and watercolour, a work by Giovanni Battista Tiepolo is of a lightness and freshness very particular to this great Venetian painter.

Among the scenographic pictures there appears, besides a rich representation of contemporary engraving, a superb view by Piranèse which displays a classical interior but which is as fascinating as purely imaginative works. As for the landscape of the same era, we must stop before an excellent pen drawing by Jean-Baptiste Le Prince, dated 1777, which has all the delicacy of a Watteau. If we keep to the same area of 18th century French artists, Fragonard is perfectly represented by *Confidence*, precious in the changing lustres and the coloured folds of the fabrics.

Neo-classical taste, which continued until the XIXth century, seen from the most positive and perfected aspect, and worthy of a painter like David or Ingres—who also appear in this exhibition—is well represented by a delicate work showing *Hesiod and the Muse*, dated 1858, by Gustave Moreau. However, the choice of drawings intended to be sent to Florence (it is so stated in the very preface of the authoritative catalogue) also includes an important group of modern and contemporary artists, although it is more difficult in Italy than in America to be able to enjoy the presence of works like those of Redon, Bonnard, Marquet, Renoir, Signac, who represent the best of Impressionism and various 20th century schools. We should like at this point, to call

attention to, and give a reproduction of a marvellous pencil drawing representing a *Young girl seated on the ground* by Suzanne Valadon, which is rigorous and extremely valuable in the incredible exactness of the stroke, worthy of the best Picasso and even certainly more vigorous than a drawing by her son, Utrillo, who is however, held in greater esteem by the critics and the public.

Among the numerous sketches of almost contemporary artists, whether it is a question of Matisse, Nolde, Rouault, or even Zadkine, Kirchner, Klee, or Moore, we were particularly impressed by a masterful drawing by the wizard of modern graphism, which Picasso still is, a *Woman standing, seen from profile*, dated 1906, which as the catalogue says "remains standing with the easy assurance of a figure in the frieze of the Panatheneans of the Parthenon". That is why we can consider perfect the choice of this drawing, for the cover of the catalogue, as well as the notice spread all over Florence, and even almost all of Italy. By the force and clarity of a stroke that we can justly consider as classic, Picasso's woman reunites tradition and newness in a single image, and the past and present at the same time, as always happens when art is true.

Translation by Yvonne Kirbyson

The Drawings of the Ottawa National Gallery in Paris

BY JEAN-DOMINIQUE REY

In a similar vein to the "imaginary museum" that not long ago André Malraux dreamed of with a lot of more or less faithful reproductions, our time has become that of the *moveable museum*. Today works of art are travelling. Sometimes the respect that they are shown is the same as if they were heads of state; a few years ago the *Mona Lisa* left the Louvre with a motor escort before going to cross the Atlantic. More often the works take long and complicated organised journeys like prominent tourists . . . which people would go to see.

In this movement of masterpieces, there is sometimes observed a boomerang action which has them temporarily return to the place of their origin. After having been patiently acquired one by one in Europe, often in London, by the dynamic Kathleen Fenwick, the most beautiful Italian, English, and French drawings of Canada's National Gallery, are now travelling in the opposite direction; after London (at Colnaghi's), and Florence (Musée des Offices) they are here in Paris (Cabinet des Dessins du Musée du Louvre). The legendary immobility of the museum is henceforth something of the past: the works come to life again under new eyes, and acquire a new dimension by contact with an enlarged public.

But it would be unfair to use this boomerang action as a pretext to neglect the precious Flemish, German, or Spanish woodplates of this wondrous Canadian collection. If the *Concert of Angels* is only "given" to Memling, this attribution becomes a certainty when we observe the unerringness of the drawing. Dürer's study of proportions is treated like an engraving. *The mystical marriage of Saint Catherine* by Abraham Bloemaert has the terse refinement of a great mannered work. With his *Fox*, Paul Klee counts at once on the resources of humour and calligraphy. The Goya of *Holy Week* treats the masks, bonnets, and streamers like so many banderillas who take pride in their poise, the Goya of *Balançoire* is all impetus, but a bandeau, another form of mask, almost blinds the young woman.

The English art is of exceptional beauty. A Romney, a romantic and mythological wash-tint, whose clouds roll on like waves is contrasted with four figures by Henry Moore, set up like elements of a monumental decor. Italy and France are left. In turn we must choose from an already strict choice. Let us stop before the gracious Palma Giovane with hachured inflections, let us wander over and up the terse architecture of Piranèse, let us look at the two works by Guardi, as clear as a vision, as misty as a dream where the impalpable essence of Venice is fugitively fixed.

As for the French, the Parisian public lingers in front of the very beautiful drawing by Jacques Bellange, the light and broken lines of Watteau, the lovely ink work by J.F. Millet—whose drawings are more highly prized than his paintings, the Matisse charcoal composed of curves, circles, and spheres. But the greatest surprise remains the *Raven* by Odile Redon, a superb black and white conceived for Edgar Poe, a surrealist work because of its precision and simplicity, one of the most beautiful drawings of his entire work.

Translation by Yvonne Kirbyson

An erotic tinge in the art of Jean Dubuffet (1943 - 1952)

BY FRANÇOIS GAGNON

Between 1943 and 1952, Jean Dubuffet executed one thousand four hundred and five works (properly called paintings, gouaches, drawings . . .), that represented one, two, or several human figures (once in 1944, he even painted one with 29 figures). Nine hundred and seventy one among them represent only one person, that is 68% of the total production of figures. 16% of this 68% represent nude figures. These percentages give only a partial view of reality if we do not situate in time the phenomena which they describe. In fact, we realise that most of these nude figures belong to the series "Corps de Dames" (Women's bodies). These "Corps de Dames" caused a great deal of talk and even led Dubuffet to be called "terrible" by the French critic Michel Tapié de Celeyran. (1) In spite of everything, these paintings represent only a small proportion of the whole work, statistically speaking, and make it difficult to speak of a constant erotic inspiration if Dubuffet's work (as much as painting the female nude indicates erotic art anyway). We would be much closer to the truth if we were satisfied to affirm that each time that Dubuffet chooses to represent a nude figure, it is generally a female person that he chooses to represent.

Most of the time however (in 72.1% of the cases) Dubuffet's figures are male. Not only male, but clothed (66% of the cases). (2) We can even specify this observation and go so far as to say that it is male figures that wear most clothing. In any event, more details of clothing are noted for them. 2.5% for men as opposed to 1.5 for the women, on the average. Male attire, a jacket, a butterfly bow, watch and gold chain, smartly creased trousers, laced shoes etc., fascinate Dubuffet more than does feminine costume.

Henceforth we have spoken of the representations of single figures. Is the representation of figures by couples accompanied by the appearance of more erotic subjects, and does it become more frequent? Let us first note that out of 1405 works, only 183 represent two people side by side. Moreover, it is not always a matter of a man-woman couple. Most of them (125/183) represent two men—this is in keeping with the very high rate of masculine representation previously observed. Only in 52 cases, do we deal with true couples, in the usual sense of the word, representing a man and a woman.

Among the fifty two representations, twenty cases present a man and woman simply placed side by side without any special feature (the direction of looks, gestures, the sharing of tasks . . .) indicating in the slightest that there is communication between them. They co-exist on the surface of the same canvas, but their respective worlds do not meet. In nine other cases, communication is one-sided, that is to say that one of the two figures is looking at the other, but without the latter's knowledge. Finally there are only 23 cases where intimate communication of the couple is expressed, and not necessarily in an erotic manner. Of these 23 cases, nineteen belong to the years 1949 and 1950 and bear the frankly erotic drawings destined to illustrate the short treatise written in jargon (phonetic writing) entitled "labonfam abeber" (Bébert's old lady) (3).

Once more, our statistics fit in like the parts of a telescope, and it is always at the small end that are concentrated the representations of an erotic character in Dubuffet's work.

Jean Dubuffet is a painter who writes a great deal. Hubert Damisch recently took the trouble to reunite in two large volumes of more than 500 pages (exactly 543 and 558 pages each), the texts of Dubuffet under the title "Prospectus and all following writings" (N.R.F. 1967) (Translator's note—Nouvelle Revue Française). There are several passages there which confirm the impression which arises from our examination of the 1405 works. The most explicit is clearly titled "Congé aux seins et aux fesses" (Be done with breasts and buttocks). It belongs to a collection called "Notes for the discerning literati" which was written in the spring and summer of 1945, for the gentlemen Pierre Seghers, Louis Parrot, Jean Paulhan, Georges Limbour, etc. . . all discerning literati, "who paid attention to his work and expressed the desire to write about it." (4) Here is the "note" such as it is, complete and without remarks:

Be done with breasts and buttocks.

Man calls what enraptures him beautiful, so does the sensualist the object of his appetites; but art deals no more with sexual drives than it does with those of the stomach. From the ill-considered use of the word Beauty arises the confusion which the Greeks first experienced between beauty and sex; the so singular confusion of art with eroticism. The Greeks were amused in the beginning by what was unusual and scabrous in the relationship, instead of that, today, the use of love themes in art is so exhausted that it is rather in putting them aside that art scandalises. There is nothing reprehensible in a painting being erotic, just like another would be catholic for example, or gastronomic, or Bonapartist, of just as well, anti-erotic, anticatholic, etc. (5)

But even before that, as early as 1944, in a project which was never

to be finished (a "Guide of Paris" that sought to have visitors discover places that were quite lacking in tourist or cultural attractions, but not less interesting for all that), Dubuffet, in a passage about the Saint-Ouen Market had spoken of his deep interest in man and his clothing (and correlatively of his little interest in nudity).

Don't tell me that man is made of skin. Naturally underneath he is made of skin, but when do we see that? In rare cases. Man is peeled like an onion. Man is quite fearful of being naked; he feels like an onion without a peel, like a plucked chicken". (6)

Finally to drive the nail home, in his "Preface to the London edition of a 'Short Treaty of Graffiti'" by René de Solier, Dubuffet had expressed at almost the same time (Feb. 1945) his slight enthusiasm for Freud and psychoanalysis:

I think it unfounded that an unrealistic doctor (whose curative methods give few results) backed by thunderous applause affirmed that all the impulses and manifestations of the human being were governed by the erotic appetites more or less repressed by social conventions. (7)

Thus we possess a series of proportions (our statistics of the beginning) and a few declarations dealing with the same subject. Our proportions have made us discover in the work of Dubuffet: more men than women, men clothed more than they are naked, fewer women clothed than men, more women nude than clothed, more figures placed side by side than figures expressing communication, fewer couples engaged in intimacy than couples simply placed side by side, group nudity is extremely rare (groups never larger than three persons) . . .

In short, and that is the impression that may be had from the reading of the texts, which were also quoted, there is a series of propositions which are not now customary. Quite the contrary! If it were necessary to make statistics on the pictures of man and the couple which are most often shown us, we would no doubt arrive at something very different: more women than men, nude more often than clothed, more completely nude women (many female nudes, a great many female nudes), more couples more or less engaging in intimacy than couples simply present, increasing group nudity . . . We see that the current proportions are the opposite of those of Dubuffet, and we have not attempted to gather current declarations on the same subject. Does Dubuffet want to propose a new way (new, different?) in which to consider sexual matters? Dubuffet does not seek to propose anything new at all, especially not a new way . . . There is nothing he likes less than a manner and mannerism. So?

The proportions that we mentioned in the beginning do not correspond to the usual way of considering things because they correspond to no way at all. They reflect only a view, with no particular circumstances, of sexual matters. In the same way that culture kills art, so an obsession with sex kills sexuality. In the same way that colleges of academicians, rings of buyers and sellers, the journalistic body, the innumerable art teachers, the numerous-as-grains-of-sand art writers and critics, flattering, criticizing, distributing rewards are, in the process of killing art which they surround with such untimely cares, we might wonder, in the same way if sexuality is not threatened with the same fate, seeing the large stock made of it by flatterers, prophets, therapists, exorcists, writers, pictorial newspaper salesmen, filmmakers, policemen, professors, criminologists, sexologists, psychoanalysts, psychiatrists, and psychologists . . .

In substance, Jean Dubuffet says that art is a character desiring anonymity: as soon as we define it, as we discuss it too much, it disappears. Would the same not be true for sexuality? For the latter also, would it not be saner that it occupy a MORE MODEST place?

Translation by Yvonne Kirbyson

NOTES

- (1) "Dubuffet the terrible" I and II, in News Post (Paris) Nov., Dec., 1950
- (2) It is not always easy (for sometimes the representations of figures are tiny or lost in a tangle of lines), to decide whether the figure is male or female, clothed or nude. Thus, to the 72.1% male we can add only 25.9% female, and to the 66% clothed only 16% nude. The other cases are undecided, but in general, the indications lead one to think that these figures which are undetermined are at once male and clothed.
- (3) achve din prime oprintan diznesa sinkant danplu gran sece e tire a sinkant egznanpler. (printing completed in the spring of 1959 in the greatest secrecy—50 copies printed)
- (4) Hubert Damisch, "Jean Dubuffet. Prospectus and all following writings" N.R.F. 1967
- (5) Op.cit. vol. 1, p. 80
- (6) Op.cit. vol. 1, p. 109
- (7) Op.cit. vol. 2, p. 13

modern art. This exhibition which corresponded, moreover, with the death of two of the former leaders of the Bauhaus, Walter Gropius and Ludwig Mes Van De Rohe, underlined the importance of the architectural discipline of which these two men were among the most representative adherents in our century.

It was with a new concept of architecture that Walter Gropius opened the Bauhaus in Weimar shortly after the first world war. The woodcut by Lionel Feininger which was used on the school's prospectus clearly shows us the guiding idea: the gothic cathedral, the meeting point of all medieval creative forces, conceived as a microcosmic diagram of the universe. The Bauhaus will attempt to rediscover this technological synthesis, this close collaboration of craftsmen which has remained unparalleled in history.

In the excitement of the new Weimar Republic, amidst the chaos of the German defeat, the Bauhaus are going to attempt to rethink and adapt the industrial civilization to human needs.

Fifty years have passed, and the works of the Bauhaus have taken hold on, and influenced our way of life and our environment to such an extent that it is becoming increasingly difficult to distinguish the creative power and originality of the Bauhaus, as the solutions tested in disciplines as diverse as architecture, painting, sculpture, theatre, industrial design, typography, photography, ceramics and weaving, have, for the most part, found a use in our daily life.

The basis of the Bauhaus teaching is given by ateliers, indeed, the school does not claim to form artists, but rather craftsmen of the new industrial age.

Breaking with academic tradition, the Bauhaus will try to involve, in a direct manner, the student with the problems of the material; and Gropius will declare. "Together, let us conceive and create the new buildings of the future which will cast architecture, sculpture, and painting into a single mass, and which, from the hands of a million workers one day will reach to the heavens like to crystallized symbol of a new faith".

To understand the organization of the school, I believe it is indispensable to refer to the organizational diagram of the curriculum. (Translator's note: see diagram in original article)

By providing their students with the possibility of technically mastering tools and machines, the Bauhaus sought to form artists able to express themselves in the industrial language of their time, thus suppressing the clear dichotomy encouraged by the 19th century academy, namely, the formation of artists completely separated from the preoccupations and problems of industrial production, and by that very fact they would be unable to remedy a production not adapted to real needs.

Starting there, it is easy to understand the emphasis placed by the Bauhaus on preliminary courses intended to give the newcomer: "the experience of proportions and volumes, that of rhythm, light, shadow and colours, and at the same time to allow him to pass through all the stages of original experimentation with every kind of tool and material, to find his own way within the limitations of his natural talents".(1)

This approach permitted not only the acceleration of the subsequent teaching, but it also gave the student maturity, and a deep awareness of the world and his environment. It was the task of the professors Kandinsky, Klee, Moholy-Nagy, Schlemmer, Albers, Itten, etc. . . . to provide the students with the basis of a plastic language.

After having completed the six-months preliminary course the student was admitted into the atelier of his choice, with the goal of participating in the creation of standardized objects habitually in use that could be mass-produced. Within the studio the prototypes were criticized and improved by a group action. The models, although hand-made, required an unflinching knowledge of the methods of industrial production, in the event of a production in series; in fact, relations were very quickly established between the ateliers and industry, and exchanges took place between the workers and students.

The collaboration was an important aspect; it showed its effectiveness during the construction of new buildings of the second school in Dessau; moreover, by organizing exhibitions of their productions, the ateliers drew the attention of industrialists, and the awarding of contracts brought a redistribution of fees in the ateliers.

After spending three years in the ateliers, the student admitted by the board of artisans could begin the master's programme and participate in practical architectural research, which, as the diagram indicated constituted the end, and the synthesis of the curriculum.

The mental approach of the Bauhaus was presented nowhere so clearly as it was in the extract from the film by Marcel Breuer, where by showing the evolution of the design of the chair, Breuer leads us to the logical conclusion of the design; for after the column of elastic air to sit on, the chair object has completely disappeared, to entirely give way to the function "sitting".

The goal is to find the functional aspect which the object must take; to be rid of everything that is decoration, ornamentation, and to return to simple volumes: sphere, cube, cone, and cylinder, which

In Toronto: Fifty years of the Bauhaus

BY FRANÇOIS MEYER

The exhibition *Fifty years of the Bauhaus* which was held in Toronto, paid homage to the forerunners of what we are now used to calling

must henceforth form the volume of human space. The Bauhaus building erected at Dessau in 1926 is the best example.

After struggling for life for fourteen years, protected by the republicans, vilified by the Nazi party, in a Germany unsettled by crisis, the Bauhaus school in refuge in Berlin, was closed by the Nazis when they came to power.

For political reasons the Bauhaus were almost a failure in Germany: their productions were still not widespread enough, and the school, in spite of its traditionally cosmopolitan setting had not had the time to spread its influence in the rest of the world.

The Nazi regime by causing the Bauhaus to go into exile, contributed to the propagation of their ideas: Van der Rohe and Albers went to the United States and were joined by Gropius after a stay in England; Kandinsky settled in Paris . . .

The Bauhaus had set themselves the goal of assuring a rationalization of the entire usual environment within the framework of architecture, and of assuring planning and cooperation between the artist and industry. After fifty years numerous projects conceived between 1920 and 1930 have been realized. One only has to leaf through the catalogue of the exhibition to become aware of the dynamism and innovation of the creations; certain projects dating back more than forty years are still *avant-garde*.

By setting problems of design as synthetic problems, by trying to carry out research in a spirit of total environment, by uniting all the facets of their human activities and productions, the Bauhaus opened the way to new disciplines. Town planning, the use of land, and industrial planning are the logical conclusions of the Bauhaus' ideas.

At a time when industry is tackling a problem as vast as pollution it is our duty to bow to the pioneers of what is becoming a veritable science of human ecology.

Translation by Yvonne Kirbyson

(1) Walter Gropius: The new architecture and the Bauhaus.

The Stained Glass Window in our Time

BY JOSEPH PICHARD

The seventy five stained glass windows exhibited this summer in Montreal in the French pavilion at *Terre des Hommes*, almost all works of well-known artists, and which were presented in October at the Museum of Quebec, give us an excellent opportunity to take up the current problems raised by the art of the stained glass window.

Does this vivid light cast on an art that since its origins has successively known periods of glory and disregard signify that this art is again approaching a glorious period or is this manifestation gratuitous and admitting no real future?

One knows how closely the stained glass window has been associated with religious art. It originated in a time when the construction of churches was at its peak. How was it associated to this movement? I believe that like architecture itself, it was governed by man's desire to create for himself a spiritual place of suitable dimensions.

The Gothic nave corresponds perfectly to this desire. Conceived and built for the use of the crowds which on some days gathered there, and still gather there, it is also made to the dimension of a single man. Even today, far from crushing us with its mass, from intimidating us with its height, the cathedral is perhaps the only monument to propose a suitable spiritual space. Although usually we live in small rooms made to the scale of our bodies, we sometimes need this great air-space to feel at ease. In the same way, we feel we are living in unison with the forest or the sea, but the church's arch is exactly suited to reassuring us and yet reminding us of our limitations. The same is true of these walls of coloured glass which are not governed by any lighting system. We are pleased to look at them at length and yet, we are also pleased to find their borders.

This great edifice of stone and glass is at the service of the spiritual world. We enter it, we meet in it solely to reflect on the fate of man and take measure of its amplitude. And this constant collaboration between painting and sunlight has been necessarily required to show this. This stirring harmony agrees with our feeling for life.

For many centuries the stained glass window was one of the essential elements of the church. More than the fresco, even more than the mosaic, it became almost indispensable in all of Western Europe. It is Father Couturier, an artist in stained glass himself, who recalled what El Greco said to friends who were astonished that he had closed the window of his studio while he worked: "I do not want", he said, "the light from outside to come and disturb my inside lighting." The stained glass window does not oppose itself to the light from outside; on the contrary, it welcomes it, but it transforms it. Like the prism,

it dissociates all the colours which it then diffuses onto the floor, the walls and all the faces present, associating them with its mission of spiritualization.

It was also used, especially beginning in the 16th century, like a great book of pictures. But that was already taking from it something of its original significance. In the stained glass window of the 13th century, it is sufficient that a few allusions to biblical history appear to us. And we are less sensitive to the actual biblical depiction than we are to a certain plastic and coloured construction that reflects our own inner rhythm.

In the more rational centuries that followed the Renaissance, it was to be expected that the importance of the stained glass window would diminish. At that time it played almost a decorative role; it became a secondary element conceived in the imitation of these earthly paradises which men sought to make of their homes.

The stained glass window reappeared in the 19th century as a privileged canvas—thus did the factory at Sèvres understand it—or as a reconstitution of, or a return to, gothic times—thus was it understood by the architects of historical monuments who worked on the restoration of churches. It was in answer to the requests of the latter that everywhere window-studios, that for a time had disappeared, reopened.

However, these studios had been established only to restore ancient windows, and, when they were lacking, their style was copied for new ones. These studios practised their craftsmanship far from the studio of painters where all the lively art of the time originated and developed. It is, however, to these studios that we look when we must create windows for new churches. From this has arisen a misunderstanding that has continued until today.

From the beginning of the century new stained glass windows were commissioned from studios specializing in restoration and whose directors, who handed down the studios from father to son, had rarely received a painter's training. The stained glass window thus became a commercial product, and as the commissions were for creation rather than restoration, the works proved to be anonymous and mediocre. However, the churches did not stop commissioning them, the old ones to fill in frames which had lost windows, the new ones to cover the vast spaces which the architect, at the request of the priest, continued to leave for stained glass.

It seems that this period has come to an end. In truth, this misadventure is not completely unknown to master artists in stained glass. Since the beginning of the century, the sum total of their contributions—there have been some fortunate exceptions—to established churches as well as new ones, has been mediocre. The breath that was made between them and the lively art of the century has not been filled. Either they have ignored the great artists of the time, or they have copied them in a deplorable manner. The only thing that should have been done, which was to associate these artists with their productions, was not done. Delaunay, Klee, Kupka, Kandinsky, the Christian artist Gleizes, and many others died before we commissioned a single stained glass window.

This fact is all the more regrettable since their art, if we may say so, was so well suited to the stained glass window. But it is all of modern art from Gauguin on, that is in harmony with the stained glass window. Never since the 13th century, has there been such a harmony between the aesthetics of painting and the technique of the stained glass window. It is certain that the artists that have just been mentioned would have been excellent in stained glass, if only a priest, an architect, a master stained glass artisan had thought of associating them with this work.

Yet one exception did occur. In a small exhibition that was organized just before the Second War, the stained glass worker Hubert Stevens thought to ask Rouault, Gromaire, and Jean Bazaine for a few sketches for windows on which he was working. This was a profitable lesson. It is to him that we owe the windows of Assy, which followed those of the chapel of Vence, executed in the same studio from sketches by Henri Matisse. At almost the same time, the painter Fernand Léger was asked to do the windows of Audincourt; they were executed in glass by another studio.

The movement, unfortunately, did not take hold to the extent that could have been desired. A few years later, stained glass windows were commissioned from the painters Manessier, Bertholle, Le Moal, Elvire Jan, Janie Pichard, and Léon Zack. Against the unanimous advice of his colleagues, an architect of historical monuments chose Villon, Chagall, and Bissière to do the windows of the Metz cathedral. Braque and Cocteau also received a few commissions; finally, Jean Bazaine was commissioned to do the windows of Saint-Severin. These commissions were a very good initiative, but the initiative fell far short, considering the enormous quantity of windows which were executed between 1945 and 1965.

Today the following questions arise: 1) are we finally going to associate with the creation of the stained glass window our celebrated painters beginning with the greatest ones; 2) in what direction and towards what end shall this creation proceed?

The initiative that I took in 1968, in asking numerous painters for sketches for windows and convincing the studios to execute them, has been well received by the public. These windows have been displayed in Chartres, in Paris (Palais de Chaillot), and they will also be on display in various other cities in France. They have travelled to Canada and been displayed at the French pavilion at Terre des Hommes in Montreal, before visiting the Quebec Museum. Their choice was determined by no set school and represented rather well the various orientations of modern art: the lyric abstracts such as Manessier, Bertholle, Singier, Schneider, Janie Pichard, Vieira Da Silva . . . geometricists such as Dewasne, Vasarely, Aurelie Nemours, Gilioli, Luc Peire . . . the neo-figurative artists such as Appel, Guitet, or in a more sentimental and naive order, Caillaud, Véronique Filozof, La Giraudière, neo-symbolists such as Piaubert, Duvillier, Lenormand, and abstract artists such as Olivier Debré, Léon Zack . . . This very incomplete list—there were 75 windows—established the proof that all of contemporary painting can be in harmony with the stained glass window, and that, if we have been wrong, and if we retain a deep regret at not having associated with it all the great painters since the beginning of the century, there is no reason to persevere in these unfortunate old ways. All the great painters should work with stained glass windows as they do with tapestries, and I dare say that even more than with tapestries, the very diverse techniques of the stained glass window in our day are suited to them.

It is perhaps more difficult to answer the second question: where should these windows be placed? First and preferably, in the house of worship, whatever name it bears: Catholic church, Protestant church, synagogue, (Chagall worked for one in Jerusalem), or mosque. The stained glass window which was created for the expression of spiritual life will always find its main use in this area.

But can spiritual life be confined to the specialized monument which receives and develops it? That is a very weighty question which in part governs our life, and certainly governs the fate of the stained glass window. There is no reason why a city hall, a theatre, a concert hall, or a school cannot be considered, at least at some time, and in some of their uses, to be centres of spiritual life, this term being understood in its broadest meaning, apart from any confessional system. There is no reason why the house we live in cannot be considered in the same manner. The stained glass window belongs wherever man is intended to fully reply, with body and soul, as an individual and as a member of society, to his destiny. Its use can thus be considerable, perhaps in less important programmes than those which the churches propose, but in infinitely more numerous ones. In any event, there is one thing to which the artist of stained glass should renounce, and that is to becoming an artist of décor. This beautiful technique, this continued collaboration of the painter with the sunlight must have another purpose than to bring a note of amusement to our interiors, than to create optic illusions in hallways and vestibules, than to serve as a framework for advertising. The stained glass window is an art of expression and not a decorative art, and around us, there is an important enough need, a constant enough need for human expression, to reserve this form for it and not to consent to its degradation. The great painters on whom we call to participate will become interested only on this condition. It seems urgent to offer these prospects with decisiveness and lucidity, to this new starting point that we propose for the stained glass window.

Translation by Yvonne Kirbyson

André Kertész

PAR GEOFFREY JAMES

Première rencontre. Janvier 1968, au Riverside Museum de New-York où Kertész expose avec cinq autres photographes. Les photographies de Kertész sont pour moi une révélation. Elles couvrent une période de 50 ans et, cependant, ces photos sont fraîches, attrayantes et intensément humaines. On y retrouve les œuvres des premières années en Hongrie, des portraits des années '20 et '30, chaises, cheminées, paysages de ville, nus déformés et des images fragmentaires d'un New-York hallucinant. Ma femme et moi sommes enchantés; nous achetons trois gravures. "Il vous faut rencontrer Kertész, il sera ravi de vous voir," me dit le directeur du musée. "Mais nous partons bientôt," lui répondis-je. Qu'à cela ne tienne. Une heure plus tard, André Kertész maintenant âgé de 70 ans, par un beau dimanche après-midi, traverse New-York et affronte le froid pour venir rencontrer deux étrangers. Dans la galerie, il s'arrête devant une photographie du studio de Mondrian. "Je vais vous raconter quelque chose de très amusant au sujet de

Mondrian," dit-il. "Quand je l'ai photographié, j'ai remarqué que sa figure n'était pas symétrique et qu'il coupait sa moustache de façon à atténuer ce défaut. Je lui en fis la remarque et il me dit: 'Kertész, vous avez découvert mon secret. Personne n'a jamais remarqué cela avant vous.'" Avant notre départ, Kertész signe nos gravures et s'assure que nous avons une photographie des chaises qu'il a prises à Paris en 1926. "Je vous enverrai mes chaises du Luxembourg," dit-il. En moins d'une semaine, avec la générosité dont il était coutumier, nous recevions les chaises du Luxembourg.

La photographie a été bien maltraitée par les revues qui précisément avaient pour mission de la promouvoir. Il n'existe que quelques bons articles sur la photographie, peu de compréhension de son histoire et encore moins de critique véritable. Dans un certain sens, cela est heureux car alors les gens se sont intéressés à la photographie sans aucun préjugé. Ils y trouvent le même plaisir qu'ils prendraient à regarder des dessins animés. Par contre, cela signifie aussi que peu de bons photographes reçoivent l'attention qu'ils méritent. Parmi ses collègues, Kertész fait figure de vedette. Laissons la parole à Brassai, artiste, sculpteur, photographe, cinéaste. "Quand j'ai rencontré André Kertész, vers 1926, je dédaignais la photographie et je la considérais comme un art mineur. Ma rencontre avec ce photographe fut heureuse. En regardant ses œuvres et en discutant avec lui, je me suis rendu compte que ce "mécanisme sans âme et sans esprit" avait contribué pour une large part à enrichir les moyens d'expression de l'homme. Je fus pris au piège mais il faut reconnaître que l'oiseleur était d'une valeur exceptionnelle." Henri Cartier-Bresson est plus laconique. "Ah! Kertész," dit-il, "nous lui devons tous beaucoup." Cette dette devient encore plus apparente quand on regarde la date des photographies de Kertész. Dans les années '20, alors que la petite camera était considérée comme un outil de travail à peu près aussi sérieux que l'Instamatic d'aujourd'hui, Kertész a invité toute une génération de photographes à descendre dans la rue afin de tirer partie de ce qu'ils avaient sous les yeux et de saisir en même temps l'imprévu.

L'Entree. Chez Kertész, la maison, c'est l'homme. Il vit avec sa femme au douzième étage d'un édifice sur Washington Square. Il domine un entremêlement incroyable d'arbres, de toits, de cheminées et d'échelles de sauvetage. Muni de son œil intelligent et avec l'aide d'une longue lentille, Kertész met de l'ordre dans ces éléments disparates, invente une géométrie et agrémenté le tout d'un brin d'humour. Son appartement, très européen d'allure, est rempli de livres, de tableaux, de photographies et d'oiseaux. Il y a des oiseaux partout: un beau coq de métal sur le rebord d'une fenêtre, un pigeon de bois sur une table et une très belle cage décorée pleine d'oiseaux sculptés. ("J'aime aussi les grenouilles," me dit en aparté le photographe.) Kertész est demeuré tout à fait européen . . . courtois et raffiné, refusant toujours d'être bouclé, tout à fait à l'aise quand il s'exprime en français ou en anglais. "J'ai toujours travaillé à ma façon," dit-il en parlant de son œuvre. "Je n'ai pas subi d'influences. En Hongrie, nous vivions assez isolés et je n'ai pas connu d'autres photographes. Ma seule inspiration venait de dessins trouvés dans des revues d'enfants. Je rêvais toujours de faire de la photographie, mais je ne savais pas exactement ce que je voulais. C'est à Paris que mon rêve se réalisa. Durant onze ans, de 1925 à 1936, nous avons vécu une vie de poésie et de rêve, nous nous contentions de peu d'argent, juste ce qu'il faut pour vivre au jour le jour. Au centre de tout il y avait le Café du Dôme . . . tout le monde était là, journalistes, écrivains, artistes, sculpteurs, peintres, nous les avons tous connus. Dans ce milieu et au cours d'une période remarquablement réceptive aux idées nouvelles, Kertész n'éprouva aucune difficulté à publier ses photographies qui toutes étaient authentiquement originales; ses remarquables reportages parurent dans Bifur, un magazine d'avant-garde et dans Vu de Roger Vogel "le premier hebdomadaire de photographie valable. Je tentais à cette époque de créer quelque chose. Le journalisme photographique? Non, je réalisais tout simplement et honnêtement ce que je ressentais, c'est tout et cela était bien reçu." En 1936, Kertész accepta un contrat d'un an et partit pour les États-Unis. En relatant sa carrière à compter de cette époque, un même mot commence souvent ses phrases: "malheureusement." Malheureusement, Kertész ne reçut ni encouragement ni appui de la part des grandes firmes de magazines américains. Malheureusement, il passa 14 ans de sa vie professionnelle à photographier des intérieurs de maisons. Heureusement, il n'a jamais cessé de photographier pour lui-même. "Je suis un amateur," dit-il un jour, "et j'entends le demeurer toute ma vie." Kertész a conservé l'enthousiasme de sa jeunesse. Il nous montre des photographies faites il n'y a que quelques mois; photos prises de la fenêtre de son appartement à l'aide d'un télescope et qui représentent des scènes de Washington Square, entre autres, un sujet horrible montrant un noir morphinomane s'affaissant dans la rue. "C'était peut-être cruel de ma part," dit-il, "mais quelqu'un est venu au secours du malheureux. Je n'aurais pu faire cette photo autrement."

Le Photographe. Se servant d'une expression euphémique bien sympathique, Kertész dit: "Un photographe n'est jamais plus important que

son sujet." Dans un poème consacré à Kertész, Paul Dermée écrit: "Son œil d'enfant voit chaque chose pour la première fois." Par exemple, dans *Man diving*, 1917, le sujet est fort simple et cependant, Kertész seul a pu le réaliser. Le photographe à cette époque se remettait dans une clinique de l'armée pour convalescents d'une blessure qui lui avait paralysé une main. "Il était midi, le ciel bleu se reflétait dans l'eau. Mes compagnons me dirent: 'vous êtes fou, que faites-vous là?' Je leur répondis: 'Puisque cela existe, cela m'intéresse.'" *Le Pont de Meudon*, 1928, la photographie classique d'une rue. "Un beau quartier," dit Kertész, "Je me baladais, muni de ma petite camera. Soudain, vous sentez quelque chose et immédiatement, vous agissez. On n'a pas de temps pour réfléchir." Marc Chagall: "Un homme très chaleureux. Voyez cette photo bien naturelle, sans chichis." *Le Nu déformé*, 1933, fait partie d'une série que Kertész exécuta pour la revue *Le Sourire*. Un livre sur cette série devait être publié en Allemagne. Il a été remis temporairement avec l'arrivée de Hitler au pouvoir. Les éditeurs américains craignirent que ces photographies fussent mal interprétées et confondues avec la photographie pornographique. Cette série fait aujourd'hui l'objet d'un culte parmi la génération des jeunes photographes. *Sans Titre*, New York, 1962. Kertész et Elizabeth avaient rendu visite à un jeune ami dans un hôpital psychiatrique. Le personnage à l'arrière plan avait récemment perdu la vue. "Oui," dit Kertész, "une photographie troublante." *New-York*, 2 mars 1966: "Jamais ce mur et ce pigeon qui volait de haut en bas. J'ai réussi à le photographier parfaitement la troisième fois." *New-York*, 1969. "J'ai vu pour la première fois quelqu'un utiliser une échelle de sauvetage. Je l'aime bien."

Traduction de Lucile Ouimet

The Yves Gaucher Exhibit in London

BY MARIE RAYMOND

The very fact of being invited by the Whitechapel Art Gallery to hold a solo exhibition is in itself significant. The reputation of this gallery, which was intentionally set up in the East End, is in fact, already established, and its role in a strictly working-class environment constitutes an experience well known even beyond Europe.

Even if he objects to a personal criticism of this exhibition—because it was his idea—the former director, Brian Robertson, not only brings it to the attention of the readers of *SPECTATOR* but he exhorts all those who are seriously interested in an intellectual and aesthetic synthesis of high quality not to miss it and he even suggests that true art lovers see it without any artificial lighting, in order to better perceive the demands it makes on the viewer and its unexpected dimensions.

Christopher Salvesson, in the *LISTENER* of Oct. 16th, defines Gaucher's grays as musical grays, free of melancholy or gloominess, not Nordic grays with qualities of light, but rather, their effects are tonal. There is no doubt, he adds, that his work indicates an aesthetic purity which is related more to music than to a work marred by imagery, emotion, or literary reminiscences. The lines, for example, which begin inside the picture, invite one to measure their length, one might almost say their extent, while the eye follows the decisive outline. At a distance these lines float and the viewer finds himself rearranging them in a more or less definite order. Gaucher's large outlines suggest a full melody rather than polyphony, but with a feeling of counterpoint.

John Russell of the *SUNDAY TIMES* (October 26th) echoes Salvesson's review by recalling to what extent, and without any logical reason, by the emotional power of oil painting alone, a work that appears so uniform may come to life and reveal its contents, that is to say, the elements of distance and relief, of unexpected plays of colour and tone, and of strange movements that act like stimulating upsurges.

As for the English correspondent of the newspaper *LE MONDE*, G.S. Whittet, he assures us that "in the middle of a most mild London autumn, the most lively paintings to be seen are those of the French-speaking Canadian, Yves Gaucher".

Translation by Yvonne Kirbyson

Rita Letendre

BY CLAUDE-LYSE GAGNON

"I try to break open a moment in my paintings, to capture a flash of brightness while leaving an opening onto infinity, as if there were nothing left of the picture at the end... Look! It is as if I were painting a comet coming down from the cosmos, that caught my eye for an incandescent, fluorescent moment then went on its way in the galaxies."

That is said slowly, emphatically, in this variable, low, and husky voice that Rita Letendre has. She is seated just beneath one of her paintings, wearing pants that accentuate her long legs and a loose sweater that reveals nothing. She seems happy with the fall exhibition held at the Sherbrooke Gallery, which was the fruit of two years of work between trips to London, Israel, New York, and Los Angeles where she has been living for the last five years. For the next three years she will live in Toronto. She is a warm, instinctive, and charming woman. From her Indian ancestors, she has inherited her jet black hair and dark eyes, her prominent cheekbones, and also her liking for a nomadic life. She derives her composure and her passion for work, for she is a prolific painter, from her sound temperament.

"Two countries give me a light that inspires me", she says, "Canada with its very sharp light, so sharp that it gives a third dimension to everything. To trees for example. One always has the impression that they are like big mushrooms, that they are shaped and cut out. And California, which is dazzling, where the light is excessive. Have I returned after five years, because I missed the former? Rather it is by mere chance. We spent last winter in Israel with my husband's family. We were to settle in New York, this year. And a meeting with friends has brought us to Toronto for at least three years. It is fate. In fact, I am used to working anywhere. I can adjust overnight to a new home, no matter how long we are to stay. However, I did love California. I had an immense studio and also a garage for print-making."

At the Sherbrooke Gallery, the same theme was felt in each picture. Almost always this descending form from infinity coming to a focus, breaking the light up, and the colours, and multiplying them in often metallic shades. Like an obsession. Which, moreover, she explains.

"When I began to paint, my work was like lyric graphics, masses of contrasting colours; then I arrived at forms that were more precise, indeed geometric, and then I began to enlarge on them. Now I am trying to purify them, to simplify them. To summarize the dynamism of life, the flash of a moment in infinite space, in eternal time. As if I were stopping, for a time such and such a moving ray of lights."

An early riser, Rita Letendre takes up her brushes and painting knives at an hour when most people are getting out of bed; she pauses for a rest at noon. At twilight she is often still in her studio. And if, since 1955, she has had many exhibitions, and if most of her canvases have been hung in Montreal, Toronto, Los Angeles, and Tel-Aviv (last winter), it is not surprising for her abundant life is woven into her paintings.

Translation by Yvonne Kirbyson

Dürrenmatt at the Théâtre du Capricorne

BY BERNARD LANDRIault

Le Théâtre du Capricorne, the French-language resident company of the National Arts Centre, opened its first season with *La Visite de la vieille dame* by Friedrich Dürrenmatt, in a production by Jean-Guy Sabourin, the company's director.

Jean-Guy Sabourin has very little of a "monsieur le directeur". He accepted this post because of the challenge it presents; he has the impression that a new and important cultural dimension is now developing in Ottawa. For him theatre, without being an instrument of revolution, must forego its austere facade and try to develop in its audiences a taste for life and happiness. Thus he intends to mold the Capricorne company into a local and national centre of cultural animation that will expand its audiences and integrate theatre into daily life.

The first play of the season had to meet several requirements: on the one hand it had to please the different social groups of the Ottawa region and adapt itself to the prevailing linguistic conditions; on the other it had to rival in importance and caliber the English resident company's production of *Hamlet*. The artistic director chose *La Visite de la vieille dame*. With its linear style, this play could be staged as an important production, full of action and ideas, while lending itself to cultural animation by its theme and structure.

Dürrenmatt is surely one of the most important playwrights of our time. A minister's son, he studied theology and philosophy, has written a dozen plays and a few novels and is now a member of the board of artistic direction of the Bâle Theatre as well as an active producer. His plays have been compared to those of Brecht, a pessimistic Brecht. From *L'Aveugle* of 1948 to *Play Strinberg* recently presented in Bâle, Dürrenmatt's plays present a combat where the winner is the one who has best adapted himself to the materialistic morality of a rotten and disorganized world. For him, mankind is not divided between good and evil but between tormentor and tormented; it is not justice that rules, but force, violence, wealth, and vice.

In spite of this, Dürrenmatt is sometimes described as a happy pessimist. "My theatre is a theatre of absurd hope, of unjustifiable, invincible hope", said Dürrenmatt in an interview in 1960. Even if the world cannot be changed, man must bravely try to subsist. In his solitude he will make his life successful in so far as he is aware of his human condition and accepts the corrupt universe in which he lives. Refusing to despair, Dürrenmatt opens the way to a new life of sadness and cheerfulness, to a new game tinged with both irony and suffering.

La Visite de la vieille dame is typical of Dürrenmatt's dramatic universe. Claire Zahanassian, now a millionaire, returns to her birthplace. She offers her wealth to her countrymen providing that they do her justice by killing Alfred III a former lover who had allowed her to be expelled from the town, pregnant and disgraced. In this country where money is omnipotent and poverty too bitter, the people will gradually justify and accept the murdering of Alfred.

Faithful to Dürrenmatt's principle that theatre must not only say but show, Jean-Guy Sabourin's production is primarily visual. The sets by Mousseau and the costumes by Solange Legendre express the playwright's mockery and contempt. Beginning with these elements the director emphasized the rhythm of the acting and the contrasts of the play. However he could have made better use of the large stage. By reducing the space, he could have made certain scenes more intimate and have given the production a rhythm more suitable to the aggressive character of the play. While keeping the visual aspect predominant, he could have given the text and the acting more importance, in order to involve the spectator's sensibility.

In spite of these reservations, this newly formed company, performing in a new environment, managed to come through honourably. They deserve encouragement for their future productions.

Translation by Pierre W. Desjardins

Orphée

BY PIERRE W. DESJARDINS

Gabriel Charpentier's *Orphée* was perhaps the most original of all the works created for the inauguration of the National Arts Centre in Ottawa. However, publicized as a chamber opera, it did not attract the audiences that it deserved, perhaps because of the reminiscences of powdered wigs conjured up by the term chamber opera. The author now prefers *Orphée* to be described as a 'liturgy', an expression more in keeping with the spirit of his work which, though thoroughly modern, nevertheless recalls Noh theatre and Benedictine paraliturgies of the Middle Ages. The work suffered initially from a lack of sufficient rehearsals and was somewhat mistreated by the critics, except those of New York who perceived its quality and originality.

Commissioned in September 1967, *Orphée* was worked out during a trip to Paris, London and Brussels in December of the same year. The work was conceived with the experimental studio of the National Arts Centre in mind and exploits the hexagonal shape and technical resources of this small theatre.

Charpentier had long been fascinated by the myth of Orpheus and had already written a series of poems on this theme. These served as a basis for the text of the liturgy. Charpentier's hero is a triple one: Orpheus the poet, the singer and the mime, each humbled by the limitations of words, music and movement. These three characters are joined by Eurydice and a chorus under the direction of a choryphée who comments on the action and dialogues with the audience.

Orphée's score is written for soloists, chorus, mass chorus and an instrumental ensemble of two pianos, ondes Martenot, celesta, harp, percussion and recorded voices. There are no sets; the stage is made up of words and light, colour and music. The lighting, designed by Robert Reinholdt, defines the theatrical space, creates the mood and adds a symbolic dimension. The beautifully simple and effective costumes were designed by Claudette Picard.

Orphée was directed collectively by the actors and technicians of the production (many of these actors are former pupils of Charpentier from the National Theatre School). From the piano Serge Garant directed the musicians; the actors Claude Flagel, Francine Dionne and Claude Grisé respectively supervised the folkloric elements, the choreography and the movement, while Jean Perraud and Jacques Zouvi were responsible for the spoken text. The result was a lively and fresh production where a few minor weaknesses were largely compensated by the close interaction of the actors among themselves and with the audience. There was in *Orphée* a successful fusion between theatre, poetry, music and dance to which the spectators were invited to participate actively.

Orphée has continued to evolve since its premiere: the instrumentation has been changed and the few elements of folklore eliminated (in order to accentuate the poetic mood). The text has been modified also and now has the three Orpheus successively discovering light, colour, words, and language. Future audiences will be involved even more actively in the action and the singing.

Although *Orphée* is closely linked to the theatre for which it was written, hopefully other productions will soon prolong its career on stage and on records for the benefit of a wider public. In the meantime, Gabriel Charpentier is already at work on another 'liturgy', on the theme of Prometheus.

Translation by Pierre W. Desjardins

The Sixth Paris Biennale: the keynote was participation

BY LAURENT LAMY

About ten years ago the Paris Biennale exhibition was established to present artists under the age of thirty-five. The Sixth Paris Biennale had two points at issue: the intervention of technology into art, and the viewer's contribution to the work of art.

I am willingly unmindful of the byproducts of lyric abstraction, pop art, optic art, new realism, and minimal art. What is the good, for example, of showing pale imitators of Le Parc or of Soto?

The increasingly numerous group works almost make the work of the solitary artist anachronistic. No doubt this is not true, but such is the impression felt at the Biennale.

Coming after Fuller's constructions, spatial architecture, done mainly as group work, is presented in a manner renewed by the use of the vertical or most often the slant, after the fashion of the polyhedral and multiplied cell of the honeycomb. Consequently, this is an architecture which seeks to resolve the problems of an intense concentration of population and a massive urbanization. Versatile, proliferous, still semi-utopian, this research really shows the new face of a futuristic architecture.

The artist holds out his hand to the public, forces it to take an initiative, and no longer limits its role to that of onlooker. At the Musée Galliera, an empty studio has even been provided so that the passer-by can write on a wall, put on colour, drive in nails... It is pleasant and, at the same time, a bit derisive.

From the entrance to the Musée d'art moderne, the visitor is greeted by *L'Espace Lumenophonique* (France) which transforms and translates the presence and the movements of the visitor into a variety of sounds, triggered by photo-electric cells. The *Cronus* Group from Montevideo incorporates in a scaffolding, dancers in white tights, who by their slow shifting of frames and white poles, create a moving sculpture that is constantly changing.

The numerous environments are presented under the form of happenings or "parcours". Here, there is a games room, there a small room for relaxing. A living-room that promises euphoria! Further on, a Czechoslovakian entry, a tremendous air jet, blows up all the skirts. The siren by Sergio Lombardo of Italy grates on the ears. The Biennale is often more sonorous than visual!

The most interesting thing in this Biennale, I thought, was the "poor art", the "earth art" and the question-works. Never has the work been so free, so provocative, so dependent on the attitude of the viewer. Rather, it is poverty and humiliation, the antithesis of all that modern civilization can produce, that are given us by the first element, the earth. In *La Concession à perpétuité* (France), for example, poles of earth surrounded by a few steel beams, in their distressing truth, are as fearsome as a grave. From Japan, *Les Quatre Bossos*: a canvas is spread out on the ground; on one side is a stain, a pile of red earth, on the other a stain, a pile of black charcoal. These rough materials, in the colours of blood and death are a stripping-away. How can one turn away from this?

Trente-deux messes pour des Argentins morts anonymes is the title of a

"multi-dimensional" work by the Argentinian Carballa. Bands of cloth are stretched out on metal structures, a foot apart from each other. On the cloth is the name of a person who was killed in Argentina. A note indicates that, at the same time, a mass is said every day for the 32 dead. The work, of which a part is patterned by the succession of the bands of cloth, requires, in order to fully come to life, that the viewer establish a questioning relationship between the masses and the image of the Stations of the Cross.

In a small boxing ring a chair of coloured ice slowly melts, staining the white ground red and black, to the cacaphonic accompaniment of the sounds of crowds and interviews with the boxers. In this *Combat* (France) which takes place before us, the artist is surely not executing an aesthetic work in the traditional sense of the word. The consumption by the viewer almost exactly follows the tempo of the destruction of the object. Many are the visitors and critics who refuse to consume the work of art in this manner. We are all so accustomed to looking for the permanent and eternal work of art, so fond of the security which the finished work gives us, that to see an object melt as a song passes on or as a film unfolds, seems a dubious initiative. But, after all, why not?

In this Biennale, Canada, represented by Les Levine and the *Nihilist Jazz Band* of London, occupied a place of honour. Why does Canada not take advantage of the invitation extended to all countries to present an artist in each of the sections: painting, sculpture, and prints?

Debated, considered retrograde by some, bizarre by others, the Biennale remains what the contributing countries make it. And even if a few governments are ill at ease in sending to Paris their most turbulent artists, for all that, in this vast confrontation, there has occurred an intense desire for participation, and there arose a strong wind of contestation. It remains to be seen if it was only a tornado! I do not think so.

Translation by Yvonne Kirbyson

Mr. Laurent Lamy, President of the Canadian section of the International Association of Art Critics, was a member of the jury of the Sixth Paris Biennale.

Harold Town

BY MICHÈLE TREMBLAY

The Waddington Gallery has just given us a geometric perception of art. In the next few weeks it is offering a series of canvases that, it would seem, in a formal way, bear more supple characters; although they are more rigorously constructed.

Harold Town has been an authoritative force for a long time. Toronto is now showing a retrospective of his work, Robert Fulford is publishing a fascinating book by Jack McClelland on his drawings, Montreal is concentrating on his new canvases. The Fine Arts Museum is granting him a place of honour in the exhibition of its recent acquisitions.

These facts will enable us to understand more clearly the purification which the painter has attained in his new *STRETCH* series. The balance of the forces and movements that are engendered, the problem of space relative to these movements, are treated in a manner that is totally different from that of Soto or Takis.

The long threads that reunite the elements stretched to the maximum suggest a slowness in gestation, a painstaking and prolonged effort. An interminable difficulty, which for some people, is the very component of life, of nature. Very close to this nature, Harold Town uses elements with biological forms that are sinuous and unctuous, but which at the same time are dynamic (the dynamism is due perhaps to the triangle, which is nothing else than the extreme purification of these swellings).

The living composition, the elegance and sureness of the stroke, the restraints exercised by the vibrations and contrasts of the tones, and the general tension arouse in the viewer an explosive feeling. An explosion of the same nature as that evoked by the abstract-concrete music of Ivo Malec, for example, who borrows this same explosive character from a cell by Luc Ferrari, who is working with him to create in their concerto, *Tutti*, a single sonorous formula applicable to different orchestral densities. Similarly, Town presents us with these visual formulas to which he gives resonances and a group density according to their arrangement, dynamic in *Stretch No. 3*, for example; static (the square is static compared to the triangle in *Stretch No. 9*); or even abstract, because of the elements which are grouped around

an invisible, but present axis. Using methods such as collages, and hard-edge technique, painting in oil with luminosities quite his own, he attains by painting what others have succeeded in by spacing. Painting might be alive after all.

Town also presents us with another series, that of the *Silent Lights* which, curiously enough, he worked on at the same time as the first series. At first contact, they are opposed to the formal purity of the preceding series by their complexity and also by their eclecticism. However, they both mark the distance and the febrile link existing between objects. Sometimes they depict vagueness, disorder, and great release, *Silent Light No. 3*; sometimes a meaning gives them direction, *Silent Light No. 4*.

The work of Town is rich. The painter invites one not only to participate, but, much more, to pursue his effort, to fulfill it. Like the kinetic painters he goes deeper into the condition of instability, a theme which touches us closely, and his effort seems valuable to us in the personal qualities he brings to it.

Translation by Yvonne Kirbyson

Miller Brittain—Un souvenir

PAR LUKE ROMBOUT

Lorsque je rencontrai Miller Brittain pour la première fois, au cours de l'été 1954, il était à l'apogée de sa carrière. Ses toiles se vendaient à New-York; sa réputation grandissait au Canada; bref, il était en pleine possession de son talent.

Connie, sa femme, vivait encore. Jamais je n'ai rencontré deux personnes mieux faites l'une pour l'autre. Aucun d'eux n'avait le sens de l'ordre. Ils habitaient un appartement plutôt petit dans le quartier de Chipman Hill, à Saint-Jean, et leur intérieur, où se bouscuaient pêle-mêle les livres, les meubles, la nourriture et les vêtements, me rappelait une scène d'intérieur du dix-septième siècle peinte par Jan Steen. Cette bousculade créait une ambiance où il faisait bon se trouver.

Il fallait littéralement monter à la cuisine où Connie, excellent cordon bleu, préparait les repas dans un chaos absolu. Aussi, le souper était-il généralement servi à minuit. A l'époque, leur appartement était un lieu heureux où les amis entraient et sortaient dans un va-et-vient continu toute la journée et même la nuit. Jennifer, leur fille, précoce à trois ans, invitait tout le monde à monter en leur disant:—"Venez prendre un Bloody Mary avec nous!"

Miller avait son studio à quelques pas de là et l'on apprendra sans surprise qu'il y régnait le même désordre qu'à la maison. Toiles, dessins, esquisses et matériel étaient éparpillés partout et des centaines de canettes de bière formaient une mosaïque haute en couleur sur le parquet. Miller allait à son studio quand il l'entendait car ses horaires étaient fantaisistes. Une fois au studio il y travaillait longuement. Connie s'était mise à son diapason comme peu de gens le feraient. Son intuition et son intelligence l'aidaient à le comprendre. C'était elle qui s'occupait des expositions de Miller, voyait à ce que les toiles soient correctement titrées et encadrées. Miller se fiait entièrement à son sens des valeurs et à son excellent jugement. Ils étaient des associés dans une œuvre commune.

Miller, qui ne mesurait que cinq pieds quatre pouces, avait une belle tête finement ciselée. Il ne passait jamais inaperçu soit à cause de ses vêtements un peu excentriques, ses gestes énergiques ou à cause de son langage lent et paresseux avec un accent presque sudiste. Il était très intelligent, doué d'une solide mémoire et avait beaucoup lu. Il affectionnait les citations qu'il puisait dans une vaste culture. Ses conversations analysaient par le menu gens, événements ou lieux. Walter de la Mare était l'un de ses poètes favoris et plusieurs des esquisses de Miller sont inspirées de ce poète. Il connaissait la Bible aussi bien qu'un pasteur quoiqu'il fut presque toute sa vie un chrétien peu orthodoxe. Il ne joignit les rangs de la communion anglicane que deux ans avant sa mort.

Les Brittain achetèrent durant les années cinquante une immense villa victorienne à Sandy Point, à quelques miles de Saint-Jean, sur les bords de fleuve. C'était une maison extraordinaire et qui n'a pas changé d'aspect. L'extérieur de la villa rappelle la maison de la sinistre famille Charles Adams. L'intérieur devint rapidement une copie fidèle de leur ancien appartement de Chipman Hill avec cette différence que l'on y trouvait maintenant des pianos de concert et des meubles énormes vendus avec la maison et qu'il n'était pas question de déménager. A l'époque où la villa avait connu des jours meilleurs, sinon de gloire, le grenier avait servi de salle de bal; Miller en fit son studio.

L'achat de la villa les avait comblés d'aise mais ils savaient tous deux que leurs meilleures années étaient comptées. Connie avait déjà subi une opération pour un cancer. Elle mourut en 1957 dans leur

maison. Pendant presque deux ans Miller lui avait servi de garde-malade. Une dépression nerveuse le guettait. Il avait cessé presque tout travail et il faisait face à la tâche d'élever sa fille et de tenir maison; deux tâches qu'il ne pouvait assumer. Plus tard, Jennifer fut placée dans une école pour jeunes filles et Miller resta seul dans son énorme villa avec son chien comme seul compagnon.

Un an et demi plus tard j'allai rester avec lui. J'occupais, près de la villa, un bâtiment qui avait servi aux domestiques et j'y vécu pendant un an. Ce ne fut pas toujours facile. Miller avait toujours bu régulièrement mais avec modération. Désormais il buvait trop. La mort de sa femme l'avait cruellement frappé. Cette perte irréparable l'avait rendu solitaire à l'excès et il ne pensait qu'à l'agonie de Connie. De plus, je crois qu'il se sentait écrasé par le style autant que par les dimensions de la villa qu'il habitait. Il est vrai qu'il buvait trop mais jamais il ne perdit conscience de ce qu'il faisait ou de ce qu'il disait. Même dans cette condition il travaillait constamment à des dessins et quelquefois à ses toiles. Il remplit plusieurs albums de dessins et de croquis de genre que l'on peut voir au cours de cette exposition.

Durant ses meilleurs moments, et il y en eut plusieurs, sa présence était charmante, pleine d'esprit teinté d'humour fin. Parce qu'il vivait en solitaire il téléphonait constamment à ses voisins, à des connaissances et parce qu'il n'avait aucune notion du temps il téléphonait souvent au milieu de la nuit. Les appels interurbains l'enchantèrent particulièrement. "Chacun a son péché mignon", disait-il, "c'est le mien." Je me souviens d'un jour où il avait téléphoné à un ami qui se trouvait dans un village perdu de l'Irlande du Nord. Il n'y avait qu'un téléphone au village et pendant que quelqu'un est allé chercher l'ami, à bicyclette, Miller engagea une conversation époustouffante de vingt minutes avec la téléphoniste irlandaise. Il lui récita la généalogie irlandaise de certains membres de sa famille, s'enquit de sa généalogie, parla du temps, etc. . . . etc. . . .

Malgré ses revenus restreints, il savait être d'une extravagance superbe lorsqu'il lui arrivait d'avoir des espèces sonnantes. Lors de ses visites à Montréal, Miller se rendait sur le mont Royal, retenait pour la journée les services d'un cocher et c'est dans cet équipage, qu'il qualifiait de royal, qu'il visitait ses amis et les marchands de tableaux. Les pourboires qu'il distribuait dans ses voyages étaient toujours généreux parce que, disait-il, "j'aime être bien servi." Naturellement, le

service ne lui manquait pas. Je le vis un jour dans sa chambre d'hôtel, à Fredericton, où il ne devait séjourner que quelques heures. D'un bout à l'autre de la chambre il avait aligné sur le plancher des billets de vingt dollars. Il était d'excellente humeur, presque comme un enfant, parce qu'il avait vendu une toile ce jour-là. En me montrant les billets sur le parquet il me dit: "Tiens! Prends tout ce que tu veux!"

Personne, du laitier ou de la domestique, du collectionneur et du directeur de galerie d'art ne pouvait rester insensible à l'envoûtement que sa présence exerçait. Il était à la fois un mystique, un enfant, un intellectuel, un romantique, un gourmet et, à l'occasion, un provocateur espiègle. Il était bien connu à Saint-Jean et dans certains cercles de New-York. La comédienne américaine Anna Russel était l'une de ses amis. Il avait des amis dans toutes les classes de la société de Saint-Jean et ne faisait pas de différence entre les jardiniers, les charpentiers, les chauffeurs de taxis, les avocats, les médecins et les politiciens. Les gens le fascinaient; c'est ainsi qu'il pouvait réciter la généalogie de Myrtle, sa domestique noire, qu'il plaçait au même rang qu'une duchesse.

Il continua de travailler dans des circonstances difficiles malgré sa santé chancelante. Il passa de pénibles hivers dans sa maison délabrée et impossible à chauffer convenablement. Pendant ses périodes de grande fatigue, alors qu'il buvait trop et ne mangeait pas assez, il accepta de faire des portraits qu'il exécuta jusqu'à ce que l'épuisement physique et mental l'empêcha de travailler. Il fut jusqu'à la fin débordant d'enthousiasme. A chaque année Miller Gore Brittain, D.F.C., prit part au défilé des anciens combattants au premier rang parmi les anciens pilotes de guerre. Pourtant, jamais il ne parla de ses brillants états de service en territoire ennemi.

Un peu avant Noël, en 1967, il subit une crise cardiaque qui le paralysa presque complètement. J'allai le voir à l'hôpital quelques jours avant sa mort. Il était devenu, comme le faisait remarquer un ami, le calque exact des gens aux yeux creux et cadavériques qui peuplaient ses croquis. Avec des peines infinies, il me présenta à son infirmière à qui il tâcha d'expliquer qui j'étais.

C'était là, en tenant compte de son état, une manifestation remarquable de sa volonté et de sa persévérance. Ce fut le dernier signe de notre amitié.

Clarkson, Gordon & Cie

Comptables agréés

R. V. Barnett, CA
M. Camirand, CA
L. J. Carrière, CA
J. B. Gick, CA
G. Gingras, CA
G. P. Keeping, CA
R. Normandeau, CA

H. E. Bell, CA
H. M. Caron, CA
D. J. Finley, CA
A. W. Gilmour, CA
J. P. Graveline, CA
K. MacKenzie, CA
D. C. Scott, CA

W. J. Smith, CA

Associés-résidents
Montréal — Québec

Halifax, Ottawa, Toronto, Hamilton,
Kitchener, London, Windsor, Winnipeg
Regina, Calgary, Edmonton
Vancouver