

Summaries of the Articles

Bill Trent

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SUMMARIES OF THE ARTICLES Translation by BILL TRENT

musee galliera

by CLAUDE BEAULIEU

Five Canadian painters exhibited their works in a special show sponsored by the Musee Galliera in Paris from December 18 to January 5 last, providing further proof of the vitality that marks so much of this country's painting. The artists were from Montreal, Quebec, Toronto and Vancouver.

York Wilson, of Toronto, was given a special place in the exhibition, his luminous, well-ordered, balanced canvasses being accorded display space in the Hall of Honor.

Alfred Pellán, of Montreal, who is well known in Paris, showed a number of small recent works (dated from 1956 to 1961), a selection which underlined the fact that he is a master of design and color. Pellán spent considerable time in Paris some years ago and in 1955, his works were exhibited at the Musée d'Art Moderne.

Jean McEwen, also of Montreal, brought to the exhibition some excellent examples of meditative work. These canvasses appeal to Europeans particularly because they represent the somewhat sophisticated North America of poetry and legend.

Jean-Paul Lemieux, of Quebec, brought to Parisians a taste of the cold and stark loneliness of his "terres nouvelles" (new lands). The works, however, might have been shown to better advantage had they been displayed in a small, intimate gallery.

Joe Plaskett, of Vancouver, the fifth member of the exhibition group, offered a series of works which did little to help his viewers discover the distant land of Canada.

el greco

by FRANCISCO JOSÉ TORRES

There is no disputing the fact that El Greco emerged from the shadows of history after 300 years of comparative obscurity as a result of the influence of a group known as the Spanish Generation of 98. The works of the artist, forgotten for three centuries, were virtually rediscovered about 50 years ago in an intellectual renaissance which resulted directly from the group of 98 and which produced a fresh, new appreciation of the religious, cultural and philosophical traditions of old Spain.

It would be wrong, however, to consider the artist's life and work in terms of a Spanish spirit. In terms of time and space, El Greco is universal, his life and achievement reflecting a spirit of freedom, supreme individualism and inherent rebellion.

In many respects, El Greco was a rare individualist, an artist whose universality could never be confined to the period or the place in which he lived. He found a universal, timeless truth of artistic expression which once prompted the famous biographer, Palomín, to write, "Everyone who practices an artistic profession owes an eternal debt of gratitude to Domenico Greco."

The artist was the first to fight for freedom in art, defying and finally triumphing over the established artistic order. It was because of the efforts of El Greco, wrote Antonina Vallentin, that painting finally achieved an artistic independence.

When El Greco arrived in Toledo, the city was lacking in artistic tradition and activity and had no art school. He was admitted into the old city as a stranger, a sort of eccentric whose work was never quite understood — and a stranger he was to remain all of his life. He was a stranger not so much because he came from another land (Crete) but rather because he was the kind of man who could never feel at home no matter where he was. It is possible that by remaining an outsider, he felt he could maintain a feeling of independence.

El Greco and his work reflect a constant spiritual rebellion against any force that tends to restrain or limit the free man.

picasso

by JACQUES FOLCH-RIBAS

"Do not talk to the pilot." I believe this is perhaps the most significant remark that Picasso ever made about himself. He made the comment in answer to a barrage of questions once put to him by a group of journalists, painter-friends and collectors who were trying to get him to explain the purpose of analytic cubism.

The "pilot", however, never wanted to explain himself to others. When someone tried to get an explanation, he would make such remarks as, "I don't search, I find." Caught by surprise by someone on one occasion as he carried a book of sketches in the museum of Antibes,

he replied, "I am copying what I have done to find out what I wanted to do."

It would be an error, however, to conclude from these remarks that Picasso was indifferent to his public's understanding of his work. I have known him to be furious, for example, over a detail he had overlooked, or when some particular thing had gone unnoticed by a viewer. Very much annoyed, he once turned to his friend Sabartes and said, "You don't see that red stain there — the arms, the body, the head of the baby? You must surely see that this woman is pregnant. You see it now?"

Picasso, of course, is a dual personality. He is the pilot, the lonely navigator plotting his course. But he is also very much a part of the passenger complement. The real-life Picasso can never close the door on his passengers, the public which views his works. He is an integral part of their lives, a part of their loves.

Genius can be a tiresome thing. And yet, it should be possible for an artist to gain recognition and still be liked. Poor Picasso! Picasso, a lover of humanity, a violent man, a funny man, a man of truth! And yet he might subscribe to the philosophy of Le Corbusier who once said, "I have failed in my life because I have not been recognized."

But one must not be misled. Picasso, much maligned in certain quarters, has been acclaimed as "the painter who fills three canvasses a day." He has been described also as a romantic and as a successor to Goya. But one thing is certain — and that is that Picasso's success is a constant thing. And someday, he may be recognized as the 20th century painter who most clearly represented the life of his times.

Picasso and Man

by EVAN H. TURNER

The genius of Picasso has been expressed in such a wide variety of ways and in so many different media that proper presentation of it becomes impossible without a large exhibition. Therefore, those organizing the current "Picasso and Man" exhibition being shown at the Art Gallery of Toronto and the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts wisely decided to limit their study of the artist's achievement to the evolution of his treatment of men, women and children. The result is an exciting exhibition which is probably the most distinguished retrospective showing of a non-Canadian artist ever given in this country.

Picasso is among the most prolific artists of the history of European art. A characteristic factor of his evolution has been the creation at irregular intervals of major works containing several figures which have been the apogee of his achievement. The current exhibition has fortunately been able to obtain such key works as "Les Femmes d'Alger" or the 1921 "La Source" but inevitably other major ones are missing because of various practical reasons. Dr. Jean Boggs' thoughtful selection has nevertheless successfully presented the evolution of Picasso's treatment of mankind.

Study of his total oeuvre shows that Picasso has repeatedly used women as a point of departure for his paintings. Probably few among the small numbers of artists of his stature have studied so exhaustively the variations of appearance, personality and character of women. The subject usually is the most intimate person of his life at a given moment; thus there is virtually never the casual, if appreciative observation found in works dependent upon the passing model. Given the absorption in this subject, the question arises: what exactly is the attitude of Picasso as an artist to the women in his work? A conclusion on this matter may in turn present a generalization pertaining to his total oeuvre.

A comparison of the 1906 composite portrait (page 30) with the startling 1959 "Femme Assise" (page 37) is illuminating since both, painted with the earth tones so characteristic of the Spanish landscape, were done when he was experiencing particularly the influence of his homeland. Whereas the earlier work epitomizes the young artist's somewhat romantic appreciation of the sensuous mysteries of this feminine ideal, the late work aggressively deals with the grand voluptuousness of the sitter even as a strong note of pathos and sympathy is deliberately introduced through his treatment of various details. With its abstraction of planes and because of its astonishing distortions the late work has a power and clarity of tactile form which could only have been realized by a mature and understanding person. The early picture becomes in comparison a touching, even naive, study. The understatement which characterizes the late work becomes increasingly, one realizes with study, the foundation of its power. One marvels at such freedom in these late works, a freedom which is based upon great perception and total understanding of his media which in

turn permits the most telling expression of his thoughts. Although the work of recent years is unsatisfactorily presented in the exhibition because of insurmountable obstacles, those works that are shown prove that the master is achieving his most definitive statements in his old age.

Picasso's control of technical means to convey his ideas has always been impressive. The early "Damoiselles d'Avignon", done when he was 27 years old, is almost more important as a great document of aesthetic exploration than as an integrated composition. Yet one of the more interesting aspects of this work is that even as each figure is differently treated each holds her own in the larger composition. To achieve this even as such revolutionary restatement of aesthetic aims was being realized exemplifies the artist's balance of his means and his thoughts. In marveling at this aesthetic achievement one too rarely appreciates the originality of the epic grandeur with which these women are presented.

Since a characteristic of Picasso's career has been numerous studies of the various women who have been dominant factors in his life, it is no surprise that each picture becomes another step towards understanding his attitude towards the particular subject. In comparing the several works inspired by the appearance of Dora Maar, for example, (page 36) and even the monumental work which complicates the subject by introducing elements drawn from the artist's favorite Afghan hound (page 36, upper right), the most casual viewer must be impressed by the constancy of certain fundamental physical, if not personality, characteristics associated with this model. Even more interesting perhaps is comparing the numerous works inspired by Dora Maar with those resulting from another period's friendship, for example, that with Marie-Thérèse Walter (page 35 left, up and below) one finds that a certain stylistic consistency exists within each group. This is of course in large part due to the ends the artist was trying to achieve but the degree to which the appearance of his current companion inspired the aesthetic problems the artist posed himself must be taken into account.

The range of moods Picasso explores in his painting of women is evident in this exhibition. The emotionalism of the post-"Guernica" weeping woman (page 35, right) contrasted with the calm grandeur of the earlier bather (page 33) a painting which measures only 7 $\frac{3}{8}$ " by 5" represents a range that few artists have been able to achieve. In each case how significantly the differences in technique, in the character of the lines and the forms affects the realization. Or compare these with the Colin's startlingly petulant head which has a quality separating it radically from the other works of his career. That the degree of abstraction has little to do with the expression within the picture is evident in comparing the already cited "Bather" with the comparably grand "Femme Assise" (page 34, left). Never does the artist's fundamental strength and conviction of statement vary although from time to time, perhaps particularly in recent years, the success of each work may be somewhat affected by its exploratory nature or by the lack of interest in developing all of the ramifications of an idea.

Yet when one compares a major work such as the cubist "Ma Jolie" representing a woman with a guitar or a zither of 1911-1912 (page 32) with a recent work such as the head of Jacqueline lent by the artist page 20; (this and the early cubist "Woman with Fan" arrived too late to be included in Dr. Boggs' impressive catalogue) one must speculate whether the attitude towards the subject, as opposed to the presentation of the figure, has fundamentally changed. In these two works as in all of the subjects illustrated here Picasso uses the visual attributes of a figure as an expression of his own thoughts and feelings. These feelings may be related to the person represented or they may as well be a broader statement of his emotions of the moment but fundamentally these pictures remain a statement of Picasso and not an interpretation of the represented person. To carry this to such an extreme is indeed a considerable departure from the tradition of Western painting and yet it becomes one of the most stimulating factors in studying the works presented in "Picasso and Man".

amlache

by JACQUES DE ROUSSAN

Eight hundred years before the birth of Christ, the Medes, nomads living in the isolated valleys of Iran to the southwest of the Caspian Sea, had developed a school of potters and silversmiths so talented that their works are considered today as being among the world's great art treasures. The work of these people is something of a mystery to archaeologists, however, since it is peculiarly their own without any indication of it being influenced by an earlier civilization.

About five years ago, antique dealers began spotting some of the treasures of Amlache — items such as statuettes, vases and plates. They were recognized as Iranian but it was difficult at the time to establish they were from Amlache.

But since 1962, excavations of tombs at Marlik, in the same region,

have produced some fabulous treasures of the same school which authenticated the original pieces. Among the Marlik works, discovered by an Iranian professor named Negahban, were a number of bronzes, objects in gold and some vases decorated with winged bulls, a unicorn and a fish. Most of the works now being catalogued under the general classification of Amlache come from ancient funeral rooms.

Amlache art is a magnificent chapter in the history of world art. It is a thing of lasting beauty and value.

réal arsenault

by GUY ROBERT

In March of 1962, Réal Arsenault wrote a letter to a friend to say that after a month's absence from work, he was returning to it with new hope. "I believe," he wrote, "that the spring sun will have a favorable effect on my next work. Your eulogies on my behalf give me hope of success."

The artist's own words provide an apt assessment of Arsenault, the man. There is confidence here and faith and momentum and a profound feeling for the cycles of nature.

In 10 years' time, will Arsenault be one of the great names of Canadian painting? Or, like Riopelle, will he become established in Europe? I have no fears for him in Europe, in Japan, or in Australia. With this artist, it is no longer a question of adaptability. He has but to learn about himself and about life.

"Despite all the qualities you have attributed to my work," he wrote to a friend in May of last year, "there is an inequality in my work inasmuch as certain paintings are better than others. I want my work to be infallible . . ."

It is in comments such as these that the true artist emerges. There is a fervor and a sincerity to his efforts and still he has the feeling that he might have done more.

Réal Arsenault was born in Quebec on May 19, 1931, and studied at l'École des Arts Graphiques in Montreal before taking up painting. In 1959, he made his first trip to Europe, working at Villiers-le-Bac with Brazilian and European artists. He returned to Canada in 1960, spent some time in the Gaspé peninsula and then went to Paris in 1961.

His main exhibitions were at the University of Montreal in 1955; the Galerie Artek in Montreal in 1958; Canada House in Paris in 1959 and 1960; Galerie Libre in Montreal in January and September 1961 and October, 1962; and Galerie Houston-Brown in Paris last year. The exhibition at the latter gallery (on the Rue du Pré aux Clercs) included 15 canvasses of Arsenault's enigmatic civilization. They carried, among others, such names as Manicouagan, Bersimis, Chibougamau, Causapsal, Yamaska and Peribonka.

cappadocia

by MELVIN CHARNEY

In Cappadocia, one is aware of the horizon, a long horizon always distant at the next hills. Empty plains and mountains interchange but one is fixed, hardly moving as one slides over the landscape of a never-ending and indifferent steppe. To the south, the Taurus Mountains separate this central plateau of Asia Minor from the Mediterranean coast. From Kayseri, ancient Caesarea, the extinct cone of Erciyes Dagi (Mount Argeus) follows you as you move along the wide depression of a river and up a height to the region near the town of Urgüp.

Here erosion has altered an extensive table of volcanic tufa into deep basins of rock verticals. A mountainous relief map lacking in horizontal scale was carved out of the layers of tufa. The formations of tufa stand out as objects presented for the sake of their own intensity and you cannot separate yourself from their sculptural presence. Each shape and twist catches the imagination.

In the foreground of Figure 2, for example, the surface of the rock monolith has fallen away and the process of erosion which first carved the monolith has exposed its insides. The exposed hollows resemble chambers. The chambers give scale to the presence of the monolith and the rock thus becomes a building, a conical Gaudiesque building. In another rock formation the exposed openings reveal a second building. A third and a fourth are found among the remains in the walls of a nearby ravine. With the many exposed chambers, the rock landscape assumes the guise of a city of buildings.

From the earliest times of Christianity, the eroded landscape attracted attention. The nearby city of Caesarea was the most important town of Byzantine Cappadocia, the ascetic monk was one of the national heroes and a large number of religious communities flourished in the valleys. Near the village of Maçan, a church had been cut under the pointed cap of a towering cone (Figure 1.) The portico of this church was suspended above the landscape.

The Christians brought with them into the rocks their constructed buildings. The rock-cut habitations indigenous to the valleys evolved an architecture with its own manners and rules. It is the religious environment which here presents a discordant formalism cut into the rock.

CHRONICLES

MOUSSEAU

Mousseau's latest creations in the world of color, displayed at the Galerie Soixante, are designs on round surfaces which move on supports. The designs are made up simply of parallel color bands of different hues and textures. Once again, Mousseau has opened up a new avenue of artistic expression. It is possible that in the future other artists may improve on this form but by the time that happens, Mousseau undoubtedly will be pioneering still another field.

BERTRAND

Painting need not always express feelings of pain and sadness. It can also express the joy and happiness of life and it is these feelings that Jean Bertrand has painted into the canvasses he showed at the Galerie du Siecle in February. Bertrand has used simple techniques to express simple sentiments and the result is a bright, joyful look into an undeniably optimistic world.

CHASE

It is always a pleasure to find that an artist who has searched for something has found it. This may well be the case with Ronald Chase who introduced visitors to the Galerie Libre in January to a magical world of superb imagery. Some 20 works were displayed and of these a number showed exceptional poetic qualities. There is an anonymity about the people in Chase's work. Yet their faces stir you and you find yourself recalling some long lost friend. Chase's recent works show considerable depth and beauty.

Guy Robert

CHARLES GAGNON

Charles Gagnon's exhibition at the Galerie Camille Hebert turned out to be quite as important as a previous showing of his works at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts. The works shown in the more recent exhibition are alive with ideas and are perhaps more interesting because they are more personal. Gagnon is a poet with the brush and his technique is solid and strong. He says this is the first exhibition with which he is satisfied. He has reason to feel this way.

FEITO

Following the Charles Gagnon exhibition, the Galerie Camille Hebert showed a collection of recent works by Feito. Feito is a great artist who pioneered a new form of artistic expression, often tragic but with a sense of delicacy. In his current works, a feeling of pleasure and happiness have replaced some of the old sadness. But there is, too, a brutal undercurrent which shows the artist as a sort of Goya in the lyrical sense.

CONFRONTATION

Every year, the Salon Confrontation in France invites foreign artists to participate in its exhibition. This year the salon, held in the temporary exhibition halls of the Musée de Dijon, presented works by eight North American painters, five of them from Canada and the others from the United States. In addition to York Wilson, of Toronto,

there were four Quebec artists represented. They were Jean McEwen, Alleyn, Paul Beaulieu and Arsenault. The U.S. artists were Norman Bluhm, John Hultberg and Frank Roth.

Jacques Folch-Ribas

ART MAGAZINES

Les Métiers d'Art du Québec (23 d'Avaugour street, Duvernay, Que.) is a new publication providing information on the arts of Quebec. The current issue (actually the third) is devoted to sculpture and in it is an open letter from the Association des Sculpteurs du Québec which protests the disfiguration of Vaillancourt's sculptures at Asbestos. Among other features in the issue are 12 pages of black and white reproductions of various works of art.

The issue of Cimaise for November-December, 1963, with an original cover by Bertini, features an article about Riopelle by Jean Cathelin. The article is an enthusiastic analysis of the artist and his work and is illustrated with nine black and white reproductions and two in color. Cimaise is an excellent source of information on the arts which will now appear in two instead of four languages — French and English.

Jardin des Arts for January 1964 carries a cover portrait of Zélie Courbet, sister of the painter, by Courbet. This publication devotes its pages to both current art and the arts of by-gone days and the tribute it pays to Courbet is a well-deserved one. It is by Andre Chamson, of l'Académie Française, and there are numerous black and white reproductions.

Andrée Paradis

MUSIC — JOSEPHE COLLE

A new and promising vocal ensemble, dedicated to the old masters and the works of avant-garde composers, has appeared on the Montreal musical scene. The ensemble is called the Trio Vocal de Montréal and was organized by Josephe Colle, a one-time member of the Quebec Conservatory of Music (she studied with Martial Singher) who studied at the National Conservatory of Music in Paris and then returned to Montreal to study with Bernard Diamant. The group also includes Fernande Chiochio, alto, and Georges Morgan, tenor.

Paul Martin-Dubost

CINÉMA

Trouble-fête, a film by Pierre Patry, will permit you to understand intimately the world of a young middle-class French Canadian teenager. This film, modern by its language and script, is a well directed story about a college student who revolts against the authorities, his family, his friends, in a never ending struggle for truth and honesty. The film is good and will be popular. Nevertheless one may deplore that this feature length adventure had to be produced on precarious financial basis, since the Provincial and Federal Governments (Canada being the last modern country to hesitate so) have not yet taken upon them to help film-makers in practicing their art fully. If Canada was to produce only 10 films a year as good as *Trouble-fête*, our country would be on the world map for stay.

Jacques Godbout

La bourse des Arts

Collectionneur désire acheter des bronzes ayant pour sujet des animaux, toute époque et tout lieu. Ecrire à VIE DES ARTS, boîte postale 606, Place d'Armes, Montréal.

A vendre: Gravures françaises d'artistes contemporains. — Lithographies, eaux-fortes, pointes sèches: Bardone, Bierge, Charon, Dayez, Leonore Fini, Hayden, Hilaire, Humblot, Janssem, Krishna Reddy, Lars Bo, Rémy Lejeune, Springer, Ubéda et autres. S'adresser à Vie des Arts.

A vendre: Brûle-parfum. Bronze. Chine, XVIIIe siècle. Hauteur: 5'-8" (167,65 cm). Prière de s'adresser à Vie des Arts, B.P. 606, Place d'Armes, Montréal.



A vendre: Buffet bas, tout début XVIIIe siècle canadien, région des Trois-Rivières. Deux tiroirs, deux portes moulurées à pointes de diamant; planche ancienne à la porte droite et crochet ancien en fer forgé à la porte gauche. H.: 45", L.: 53", P.: 23". — \$1,350.00. Lit à baldaquin Regency, très imposant. Colonnes tournées en merisier, côtés originaux en chêne, tête et pied en pin, ce dernier très orné. Région de Verchères. — \$1,250.00. Par lettre: B.P. 606 Place d'Armes, Montréal ou téléphone: 738-8143.