

ART TODAY. FOUR QUESTIONS TO YOUNG ARTISTS

INTERVIEW (EXCERPTS)

CONCEPT: "My work consists mostly of cycles. Often, my paintings are composed of several panels such as diptychs, triptychs or polyptychs with seven elements, since I have a preference for these old forms. Working with many elements is very complex, but since my paintings are based on concepts and musical proportions, this method of working is a must. (...)

I am also very interested in the tension and contrast between the contemporary human being and autonomous surfaces and structures (=abstract) in pictorial composition, and I feel I have made some progress in my recent cycles such as "Double-Portraits" and "Human Relations".

SUBJECT: "I try to create a contemporary image. An image of the human being today, in our urban context".

INFLUENCES: "Everything! Everything we see, every-thing that happens around us, the city, society, political events, science, , beautiful women..., each observation and experience flows into my work at some time and in some form. This cannot really be controlled and often I realize it only much later. (...) Of course, there are also some direct "classical" influences. I think spontaneously of Arnold Böcklin, Mathias Grünewald, Edgar Degas, Jan Vermeer van Delft, Frans Hals, Rembrandt van Rijn, Diego Velasquez, Egon Schiele, Eduardo Chillida, Richard Serra, Mark Rothko, Clyfford Still, Robert Motherwell, Arnulf Rainer, Franz Kafka, Sylvia Plath, Kenji Mizogushi and naturally Ingmar Bergman. What also come to mind are medieval painting, Roman architecture and sculpture, archeological maps and photographs, which are important to me, and some works of experimental cinema. But the most important influences seem to be of a musical nature, especially works of musical composers, such as Bartok, Berg, Mahler, J.S. Bach, Webern, Messiaën, Boulez, Ligeti, the string quartets of Shostakovich, piano sonatas of Hindemith, and a lot of jazz (John Coltrane, Herbie Hancock, Chick Corea, Bobby Timmons, Steve Coleman, ... Free-Jazz, etc.). Also of importance is contemporary work: musical or other forms of art. ...But I do not think drawing up lists leads to anything and such an exercise seems of little interest."

STYLE: "I believe that in art it is always *'the same thing'* and that one can work for a whole lifetime on a *'single image'* (if one has something to say). This *'single image'* is expressed in each work. In other words, the complete work is contained in each of its elements. Each painting of my cycles is done in relation to others, but is nevertheless completely independent. Each of them contains the *'idea'* in itself; the only difference is in the point of view and the perspective. I believe this could explain why it is possible to use different techniques, or even to change medium and language. I myself have switched from sketches to music and from music to painting, via architecture and sculpture. Today, such changes of medium and language seem totally natural and self-evident. (...) There is always a constant which underlies the whole work. This, of course, does not imply that one painting can replace the others, or that it is dependent on others. (...) This is also the reason why I prefer to present my paintings in cycles. I wouldn't speak of "chapters", since I do not intend to construct a narrative structure or a chronology. The rapidity of modern existence is captured in these paintings."

(Excerpts from a discussion between TR and Jean-François Lemerrier, Paris, January 1999)