

DEEP INSIDE

Jean Guiraud¹ discovered my paintings as soon as 1988. He was intrigued by its inkling of some kind of spatial tension he was not aware of. In several studies² - as well as in notes, letters and an unfinished ultimate analysis - he observed and explained a phenomenon best described as Figure Induction. He recognized that I did introduce it to painting. Surface arts usually strive to create spatiality out of bi-dimensional means and this stays true whether we're talking about abstract works or ones that represent natural objects. The Figure Induction produces transmutations of the perceived space through a discontinuous but endless process of aggregation/disaggregation of groupings unexpectedly formed by highly coloured rectangular shapes. Here are the first and last published extracts from Guiraud's analysis 3. Farewell Jean. Thank you.

Georges Meurant

Unexpectedly and endlessly (1990)

What matters is not what the painter does but how his paintings function after he has finished with them. They either remain what they are, a mere product, or they trigger their own activity and become works of art. Such activity is immediately perceived in the paintings of Georges Meurant. They are composed of coloured rectangles of various sizes, all with horizontal or vertical sides which are almost always in alignment and occasionally slightly out of line. Each rectangle differs from the others in texture as well as in colour and geometry. The word geometry indicates the position, outline, direction and surface of the rectangle. The whole work therefore forms a patchwork of coloured rectangles which has a very peculiar property. When looking at different parts of the surface, at a given moment a group of these rectangles will appear to unite, forming a single rectangle, which the next moment desintegrates, while the process repeats itself with another group and then another, each one different. If we look at the painting long enough, the permutations are endless. Even more remarkable is the fact that this takes place before our passive gaze and that there is nothing we can do to prevent it. New boundaries and groupings appear unexpectedly and endlessly, as this self-generated transposition of shapes emerge to give the painting its own character.

Not being, but becoming. Not permanence but a continuous process of birth, interchange and transformation. Totality is never attained. The work functions solely with intermediary structures, through these renew themselves endlessly.

The painter has said in this respect : « It is the exploitation of disorder caused by the initial gestures ». He uses the word « disorder », but « catastrophe » would be more appropriate to describe the initial act of dividing up the panel. With this initial motion, he breaks the unity, and the division that has already begun can only continue. Painting therefore amounts to « re-establishing the balance between order and disorder », bringing together and tearing apart, junction and disjunction, until it is no longer the painter but the work itself that performs this rite of emergence and disappearance, of birth and death, before our eyes : a rite that, I believe, no other painting has let us witness.

Transparences, transpositions, transmutations (2009)

For Meurant, colour covers form, gives way to form, is congruent with it and strengthens form. His colours establish no luminescent field, but - curiously enough - they serve only to create the shapes that constitute form. These shapes may be single or in groups; for both types, the shape ends where the colour ends. Indeed, 'group' shapes emerge, switch around back and forth, endlessly, spontaneously, becoming transparent, sometimes bringing about a barely perceptible 'equalization' of colours, attracting each other as the shapes do.

And this occurs just as each element takes on its differentiating function. By switching around endlessly as they do, the shapes reveal that they are made up of factors or elements which come into play individually or in groups. These factors, seven in number, are: hue, saturation and brightness (which relate to colour); size and form (i.e. space relative to outline); and finally, position and direction. These seven elements identify and model each shape. And it is on these elements (not a series of 'coloured blocks', as commonly imagined) that the artist operates.

Meurant puts pressure on shapes solely to make them re-shape, and he uses colour both to reinforce and destabilize form. Given that they coincide, come together and are superimposed, the contrasts and outlines compete with each other at the edge of the shapes, enabling the artist to achieve the seemingly impossible, separation of a shape from its own outline and re-assignment to any other shape or group of shapes.

1

Jean Guiraud (Castres 1929 - Brussels 2009) has been Senior Lecturer at the University of Louvain-la-Neuve, in charge of the Laboratory of Experimental Esthetics.

2

Imprévisiblement, inépuisablement, Bruxelles : Le Salon d'Art, 1990 ; The Figure-Field. Looking at Georges Meurant's paintings, Brussels : Didier Devillez Editeur, 1994 ; Space Time, Brussels : Damasquine Gallery, 1996 ; [Untitled], postface for Georges Meurant, Dynamic Gaps, Brussels : Didier Devillez Editeur / Paris : Heartless, 2000 ; Active paintings, Bruxelles : Galerie Didier Devillez, 2003 ; [Untitled], Grand Rechain : Galerie Léon Keuninckx, 2004 ; Transparences, transpositions, transmutations, Luxembourg : Toxic Gallery, 2009.

Translations by Michael Novy.

THE FIGURE-INDUCTION

Solo Exhibitions

- 2011 Deeper Inside, Aeroplastics, Brussels
2010 Espace d'Apparition, Galerie Didier Devillez, Brussels
2009 No Light Needed, Galerie Franke, Stuttgart
Transparences, transpositions, transmutations, Toxic Gallery, Luxemburg
2008 No Light Needed, Aeroplastics, Brussels
2007 Galerie Winance-Sabbe, Tournai
B. Lemerancier & Associés, Paris
2006 Active paintings, Galerie Sandrine Mons, Nice
Galerie Didier Devillez, Brussels
Galerij Negenpuntnegen, Roeselaere
2005 Das Aktive Kunstwerk, Galerie Franke, Stuttgart
L'Œuvre active, Espace Saab, Lille
2004 Active paintings, Stephan Marquardt & Gallery/Aeroplastics, Brussels
2003 L'Œuvre active, Galerie Didier Devillez, Brussels
ArtBrussels - VIP Lounge RussellReynolds / Aeroplastics
L'Œuvre active, Galerie Winance-Sabbe, Tournai
2001 Dynamic Gaps, Aeroplastics, Brussels
Dynamic Gaps, Galerie Franke, Stuttgart
Art & Advice Galerij, Hasselt
1999 Dynamiek in Raum, Galerie Franke, Stuttgart
1998 Le Champ Figural, Galerie Franke, Stuttgart
Le Champ Figural, Heartless, Paris
1997 Toxic New Art, Luxembourg
1996 Art Köln - Damasquine Art Gallery
La Glacière - Le Salon d'Art, Brussels
1995 Damasquine Art Gallery, Brussels
1994 Le Salon d'Art, Brussels
1992 Damasquine Art Gallery, Brussels
1991 Galerij Hugo Godderis, Adinkerke
1990 L'Autre Musée, Brussels
Le Salon d'Art, Brussels
1988 L'Autre Musée, Brussels

Selected Group Exhibitions

- 2010 The Alchemy of Delusion, Aeroplastics, Brussels
Brussels Calling, Musée de la Porte de Hal, Brussels
2009 S'Abstraire - MADMusée, Liège
Psychedelia Paradise - Galerie Exprmntl, Toulouse
2008 Brussels Calling, Museum Tongerlohuys, Roosendaal
Le Cube au Carré, Musée de Verviers / Felix De Boeck Museum Drogenbos
Diffracted Solstice, Aeroplastics, Brussels
2005 Pintura, Pintura, Pintura, Galerie Carl Vander Voort, Ibiza
2003 Gemischte Gefühle - Mixed Emotions, Galerie Franke Stuttgart
2002 Permutations, Espace B, Glabais
2001 Psychedelia, Aeroplastics, Brussels
1996 Space-Time, Damasquine Art Gallery, Brussels
1995 Art contemporain belge, Musée d'Ixelles, Brussels
1993 Art Walls + B - Damasquine Art Gallery, New York