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JACQUES VILLEGLE

PAINTING WITHIN NON PAINTING (1964/1993)

PRIVATE VIEW 28 OCTOBER 2010
EXHIBITION, 29 OCTOBER-4 DECEMBER 2010

For the sixth in our series of exhibitions dedicated to the Lacéré Anonyme cycle, this year we are immersing ourselves in “Painting within Non Painting.”

If *Mots* (1999) and *La Lettre Lacérée* (2007) reflected Villeglé’s conversancy with graphic art and taste for writing, and while *Images* (2001) and *Politiques* (2005) took us on a journey through over fifty years of the history of French society, the exhibition *Sans Lettre, sans Figure* (2003) was the exhibition that came closest to abstract painting in the classical sense of the term. However, it is with the series of “painters’ posters” that this Nouveau Réaliste artist really settles his scores with Art History.

As Bernard Blistène very rightly observes:

“his work comes across as above all a visual reality, an affirmation that it invents painting by destroying it. Villeglé even inscribes his work as a kind of subtle and often acerbic commentary on the mythical entity that is painting. His task is to continue it by means of other subterfuges. He must build what some call “an aesthetics of risk,” but an aesthetics that always manifests its scepticism as to the domination of one model by another, as to the supremacy of one genre over another, as to the primacy of painting as such.”*

The artist himself takes this idea further in his text “Lorsque les peintres s’affichent”:

“The an-artist, Marcel Duchamp, an ‘individual genius,’ proposed by way of a reciprocal readymade a Rembrandt to be used as an ironing board, being a collector of non-painting by the run-of-the-mill. It was after several détournements that, in cavalier fashion, I introduced painting by the individualists of our age into the circuit of tearing. These paintings diverted by printing and made into posters are again diverted, once posted, by the anonymous tearing hand, before I send to museums, galleries and other cultural venues these remainders of posters designed by painters for an exhibition, for the propaganda of a party, for an advertisement for this or that manufactured object (professionals are thus involuntarily paying homage to the Salt Seller. Is this nymph amie?)

I have thus garnered works signed by the following painters: Alechinsky, Ben, Bingham, Braque, Buffet, Combas, Dalí, Dubuffet, Forbera, Hubaut, Kirchner, Klee, Léger, Matisse, Mathieu, Paella, Picasso, Raynaud, Rousseau, Van Dongen and Winterhalter. The teeming posting of works by Georges Mathieu and then Jean Dubuffet, between 1965 and 1975, had enabled me to give two fairly complete and contrasting versions of this theme, given the lack of affinities between the two protagonists.”

In order to illustrate this theme, we will be exhibiting some fifty works from 1964 to 1993. Some of these have been shown before, notably in the artist’s retrospective at the Pompidou Centre in 2008, while others are being seen for the first time.



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* In Bernard Blistène, “Painting within Non Painting: Villeglé’s Dilemma,”
in the catalogue being published for this exhibition.