

Georges Mazilu

COMMENTS

Historical time is spiral-like. This is why our privileged relationship with the past is less due to proximity than (sic) to a kind of short-circuit. The paintings of Georges Mazilu, more than any other, make this obvious to us by a paradoxical contact between our twentieth century and the fifteenth century of the monsters of Bosch, as obvious as crystal clear Florentine skies which stand out in the vaults of convent ceilings. There is a doubtless kinship between their chaos and ours, that of refinement and savagery, that of insolent wealth at the same time as atrocious misery, energy and anguish, recklessness and despair. Twinned times of uncontrollable discoveries and crazed dreams in the void.

Art, then, is a mirror. Does it deform? Not really. Rather, it's a magic mirror in which we hesitate, even refuse, to recognise ourselves. Backing off, fascinated by the images that this magician, the artist, makes appear under a charm which he is only ever half-conscious of.

Georges Mazilu is with no doubt one of those painters, a mage and a seer.

But is it only the past which imposes the visions he has fixed on canvas?

As in our dream-like figments, aren't they a surreally and absurdly synthesized and telescoped present as well as future that has been weighed down by all our terrors (sic)? Infernal visions? Certainly! But more a terrestrial hell—like that of a terrestrial paradise—the wrong side of the Promised Land. Impassive, frightful countenances, beings clothed in flesh so “normal” that they seem surprised by our own surprise! After all they are just like the faces we see on trains and buses. Denied and disembodied corpses which have become artificial limbs! The prospects of a future where humans will be utilitarianly reduced to heads and body members, and indeed, quite frankly, sexual organs, too.

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Ultimately there would be only anthropomorphic structures, like inexistent knights such as those of Italo Calvino. Fortunately, excess at this point raises tension by losing humor, quite the same as the concave-convex mirrors or a carnival fun-house which are supposed to show us the grotesque side of ourselves, or even like King Ubu marionettes that make us laugh at the hidden shame of our deepest secrets. Georges Mazilu—doesn't he come from that Rumania which today is so much like—merdre—an Ubu kingdom of absurdity. But laugh only for a moment, for the smile will freeze on your face in a grin or a grimace! As soon as the demon's dance is finished the devil abruptly stops the game.

No! These beings are not us! What, then? Mutants as well as animals? Strange creatures from afar, or the off-shoot of some kind of mutation? {Aren't some even like slimy organic foetal substances?}

Is this biological socery (sic)? The kingdoms and the species have become mixed up. It's impossible to say if these madonnas or princesses (sic) with pure faces are victims of a spell, or on the contrary, have just escaped from a cocoon to fly off like human butterflies.

Nothing of all this comes from our known universe, or from our myths assimilated into our culture so long ago. This is a genuine invention made for exorcising the worst which from now on is haunting humanity which dares no longer to dream of happiness. We are thrown to dizzying, denaturing heights that only human beings are capable of. Mazilu's images are a trap, an eternal movement of surrealism. And they even surpass their plastic medium with their smashed cameos in explosions of pure color, stretched to perfection like his trompe l'oeils, or the effectiveness of his work in relief. If your glance is captured you won't (sic) be able to tear your eyes away. You will be haunted forever. The painter's nightmares are become our sphinxes (sic). The response that we give to their questions will decide our fate.

Michel Lequenne, "Where do the 'devyls' of Georges Mazilu come from?" Georges Mazilu: peintures et dessins réalisés de 1984 à 1989. Paris, France: Georges Mazilu, 1989.