Beat: Arts

BERNARD BUFFET & JEAN COUTY - PARCOURS CROISES (Crossed Paths) EXHIBITION

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USPA NEWS - During World War II, the Relations between Art and War can be articulated around Two Main Issues. First, Art found itself at the Centre of an Ideological War. Second, during World War II, Many Artists found themselves in the Most Difficult Conditions (in an Occupied Country, in Internment Camps, in Death Camps) and their Works are a Testimony to a Powerful "Urge to create." Such Creative Impulse can be interpreted as the Expression of Self-Preservation, a Survival Instinct in Critical Times. It is Important to observe how Big of a Part Art had played during the Post-War Period, consequently leaving behind a Sea of Brilliant Artworks.... Two Brilliant Examples are Bernard BUFFET & Jean COUTY !

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Art always responds in Some Way, and so the Vantage Points from which to observe it were polarized as well, which gave Birth to a Vast Number of Concurrent Streams. Therefore, we can see the Most Obvious Difference between the Tendencies toward Abstraction, suggested by the Pro-Democratic American High-Culture, and the European Post-War Art, which fell under the Slight Influence of Figuration and Realism. Figurative Art describes Artwork (particularly Paintings and Sculptures) that is clearly derived from Real Object Sources and so is Representational. The Term is often in Contrast to Abstract Art. Figurative Art describes any Form of Modern Art that retains Strong References to the Real World and particularly to the Human Figure.

Landscape Painting is the Depiction of Landscapes in Art (Natural Scenery such as Mountains, Valleys, Trees, Rivers, and Forests, especially where the Main Subject is a Wide View) with its Elements arranged into a Coherent Composition. In other Works, Landscape Backgrounds for Figures can still form an Important Part of the Work. Sky is almost always included in the View, and Weather is often an Element of the Composition.

Before the Invention of Photography, a Painted, Sculpted, or Drawn Portrait was the Only Way to record the Appearance of Someone. But Portraits have always been more than just a Record. They have been used to show the Power, Importance, Virtue, Beauty, Wealth, Taste, Learning or Other Qualities of the Sitter. In fact, a Portrait is a Representation of a Particular Person. A Self-Portrait is a Portrait of the Artist by the Artist. Is it possible to distinguish between the Object Depicted in a Painting and the Artist's Way of Seeing ? The Medium of Painting, unlike Photography, does not necessarily abide by the Laws of Reality. The Artist is Free to represent Anything his or her Mind can imagine.

BERNARD BUFFET was Born July 10, 1928 in Paris, died on October 4, 1999 in Tourtour (Var - France). In December 1943, he entered the « Ecole Nationale Superieure des Beaux-Arts » where he studied for Two Years. After this he worked Alone. In 1946, he had his First Painting shown, a Self-Portrait, at the "Salon des Moins de Trente Ans" at the Galerie Beaux-Arts. In 1947, he exhibited « L'homme accoude » at the Salon des Independants and in December of the Same Year he had his First Solo Exhibition , at the Art Impressions Book Shop in Paris, organised by Guy Weelen and Michel Brient. Raymond Cogniat bought, for the Paris National Museum of Modem Art, a Painting entitled « Nature morte au Poulet ». In 1948, he was awarded the Critic's Prize at the Galerie Saint-Placide in Paris, in conjunction with Lorjou.

In 1953, Louis Aragon wrote, in "Les Lettres Francaises", an Article entitled Le Paysage Francais a Quatre Siecles et Bernard Buffet 24 ans (Four Centuries of French Landscape Painting and the 24 Years Old Bernard Buffet). In 1955, he was awarded the First Prize

by the Magazine "Connaissance des Arts", which named the 10 Best Post-War Artists. He met Georges Simenon who became his Close Friend. In 1958, at the Age of 30, the First Retrospective of his Work was held at Galerie Charpentier. The Same Year Pierre Berge published "Bernard Buffet" at Editions Pierre Cailler, and Georges Hourdin published "l'Enfer et le Ciel" de Bernard Buffet at Cerf. December 12,1958 Bernard Buffet married Annabel Schwob at Ramatuelle. In 1961 he painted a Series of Paintings depicting the Life of Jesus Christ, intended to decorate the Chapelle de Chateau l'Arc. Ten Years later, at the Request of Monseigneur Pasquale Macci (Secretary to Pope Paul VI) he offered these Paintings to the Vatican Museum where they remain on Permanent Exhibition.

In 1964 Maurice Druon published Bernard Buffet at Editions Hachette. In May, 1971 he was named « Chevalier de la Legion d'Honneur ». November 23, 1973 the Bernard Buffet Museum was inaugurated ; it was founded by Kiichiro Okano, in Surugadaira, Japan. March 13, 1974 he was elected to the Académie des Beaux-Arts In 1978, at the request of the Postal Administration, he designed a stamp depicting l'Institut et le Pont des Arts. In 1986, « Bernard Buffet » by Yann le Pichon edited by Maurice Garnier, obtained the Elie Faure Award. December 9, 1988 a large extension to the Bernard Buffet Museum was inaugurated in Japan. In 1989, Alin Alexis Avila published « Bernard Buffet », edited by Nouvelles Editions Francaises aux Editions Casterman.

Born in 1907, JEAN COUTY's Devotion to the World of Art and Architecture first began when he entered the Ecole des Beaux Arts in LYON (France) in 1921, upon the Advice of the Man he would always consider his Master, the Architect of French Modernity, Tony GARNIER (1869-1948). Jean COUTY, in his Early Work, often drew his Inspiration from his Immediate Surroundings : his Family and the Countryside around him. His Family as was Typical of their Time and Social Standing, allowed him to experiment with the Art of the Portrait. He painted Faces and Situations which bore the Stamp of Reality and Authenticity.

Jean COUTY had not even turned Twenty when he painted 'The Revolution in the Village (1936), followed by 'The Parable of the Mad Men (1937), then an Analysis of the Complex and Authoritative World of the Christian Church with its Many Followers, Ornate Clothing, Décorations and Precious Objects. Priests, Monks, Nuns and Bishops would form the Subjects of his Intricate Portrayal of the Formidable World of the Catholic Church. 'Bread and Wine' Central to the Catholic Idea of Sharing, would become the Subject of Some Powerful Still Life Paintings. Jean COUTY always manifested a Strong Liking and Talent for Drawing. As a Young Man, he often made Use of the Presence of his Family, encouraged by his Sister, who shared his Great Talent. Jean COUTY showed his Commitment to the Christian Church by honoring Bernadette Soubirou (1958).

Jean COUTY always felt a Need to write about the History of Art. He also wrote in the 'Temps Nouveaux'. He was always guided by Grand Spiritual Inspirations and by his Undeniable Culture, he paid Frequent Visits to PARIS where he attended Exhibitions. Jean COUTY invariably expressed a Real Sense of Commitment. In 1959, Jean COUTY set out a "Tour of FRANCE" to study and paint 'Romanesques Churches : Saint-Lénonard, Saint-Michel de Cuxa in the Eastern Pyrenees, Linvernon in the Lot, Semur-en-Brionnais, Saint-Julien in the Haute-Vienne.... He was passionate about Cathedrals : Cahors, Guebwiller, Angoulême, Notre Dame de Paris... In 1961, Jean COUTY has caused a Stir in PARIS when he exhibited Twenty Romanesque Churches at the Premises of Katia GRANOFF. An Inhabitant of LYON,originally from the Department of Creuse, competing with the Best Artists of his Time, such was Jean COUTY, when he was Awarded the "Prix de la Critique d'Art" in PARIS in 1950, together with Jean LE MOAL, a Member of the LYON Group 'Témoignage'...

* Photo : Lydia HARAMBOURG, Nicolas BUFFET, Blanche BUFFET, Danielle BUFFET, Charles COUTY

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