



FABRIQUE DE L'ART N°1
FABRICATE (FABRIC OF) ART

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TRIMUKHI PLATFORM | is a not-for-profit organisation founded in West Bengal, India. It is born from a desire to create a platform enabling to operate in three different directions: social action, artistic production and theoretical research. Art and thought need to be produced by all strata of society so there is not only a diversity of propositions but also relevance and accuracy. This yearly journal on contemporary arts practices (*Fabricate (Fabric of) Art*) is published in this context.

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my history of the arts

¹ This text owes a great deal to the critical and well-informed rereadings of three colleagues (Bertha Diaz, Julien Nénault, Víctor Viviescas) and four students (Mauricio Gomez, Ana Azuela, María Vazquez Valdez, Gabriela Olmos).

² Cf. Johannes Neurath, *La vida de las imágenes*, ed. Gabriela Olmos, Mexico, Artes de México, 2013.

Rereading the history of the arts is a dodgy enterprise as the exercise ultimately consists in casting one's gaze – re-constructed and pre-organized according to one's current self – over past events and activities¹. Rereading is always a matter of reconstructing. As a result, the History that we study can only ever be contemporary. And yet the exercise also offers a few virtues – first and foremost, being that of highlighting variations in perspective: reminding us, for example, that we have not always, since the beginning of time, looked at an art work in one single and unique manner. Here, looking at a work is as much considering its anthropological status, its social function, the poetic nature or not of the activity consisting in producing it, as the aesthetic process by which we engage with it, and sometimes even are driven to act. These, in any case, are the reasons prompting philosophers such as Jean-François Lyotard and Jacques Rancière to try their hand at the exercise. Both of them distinguish three regimes, but the system

by which each one classifies them differs. If I, in turn, assuming the bias inherent to the enterprise, am now having a go at it, the history of the arts that I propose will be in four parts. But I will make no attempt to place precise dates on these; firstly, not being a historian, I would be out of my depth; secondly, it is very likely that today we do not so much see a succession of syntagmas but rather a superposition of paradigms.

↳

I'll make my start abruptly. The first moment is the one of sacred art. The art work – as far as it is appropriate to speak already of "art" – proceeds by invocation-convocation. What it invokes or convokes, to put it succinctly, is in heaven, in Hades (hell), or else, if in the world, not strictly in the worldly world. Art objects acted as intermediaries between their spectators and the divine forces surrounding them. Like the hole at the centre of the Huichol *nierikate*²,

art objects are ways to pass through, points by which to access these forces. They serve to experience and celebrate the presence of these forces, or at least the relationship that spectator-believers construct with them. And in the same way that, for Huichols, a relationship with the *nierikate* would necessitate several days' hiking in the sierra, these art forms required long contemplative experience that could be "exhausting" – with exhaustion leading to a release of tension, and hence, availability and openness³.

In Europe, we could speak of this seventh-century Coptic icon, *Christ and Saint Menas*, conserved at the Musée du Louvre, whose function, for Christians who contemplate it at length, is precisely to help deepen their relationship with Christ, in this case a relationship of friendship⁴. But we could also speak of the small clay animal figurines that Santhal villagers in India place at the edge of forests according to a half-day long ritualized procedure performed right before the sowing season.

But all the same – that's why dating is delicate to define –, we can also consider Simon Hantaï's pictorial work that consists more or less in producing "acheiropoieta at the threshold of the 21st century" – that is, images which, in the Middle Age, were considered as not being made by man and hence miraculous: "untouched by man because touched by God⁵". Which, in contemporary terminology, would amount to saying: the artist withdraws to let the divinity takes over. "Never the word creator...⁶", Simon Hantaï would insist.



The second moment is the moment of figurative art: the art of representation properly speaking. A considerable shift occurred in relation to the previous paradigm. The clay figurines used by Santhal villagers do not strictly represent specific animals – in fact, one would have trouble identifying them exactly. Similarly, *Christ and Saint Menas* participates in an apophatic theology, a tradition of thought that proceeds by successive eliminations in order to approach divine mystery: if God is

³ Cf. Gilles Deleuze, "L'Épuisé" in Samuel Beckett, *Quadd*, Paris, Minuit, 1992. Deleuze insists on the link between "exhaustment" of a person and "exhaustion" of all possibilities. (1) If the "spectator" is exhausted, it is because he has used all his effort. (2) Once all effort has been used, the "spectator" gives up and because he gives up; and because he stops making effort, he releases tension. (3) When exhaustion leads to a release of tension, there is availability, openness to listen. Something else comes up, that the "spectator" is now ready to focus. Cf. in French: Jean-Frédéric Chevallier, *Deleuze et le théâtre. Rompre avec la représentation*, Besançon, Les Solitaires Intempestifs, 2015, p. 93-94.

⁴ In fact, the ecumenical community of Taizé calls upon this icon *The Icon of Friendship*. Br. Jean-Marc recently wrote: "The object of icons is prayer. But [...] prayer is a relationship, friendship with God. This means that [icons] are made to help us enter into a relationship with God, to deepen this relationship and to help it grow." He goes on to point out: "In order for the icon to speak to the heart, much time must be accorded to it. Perhaps it needs to be returned to again and again." Br. Jean-Marc, *Les icônes*, tr. Myriam Perriau, Les cahiers de Taizé n° 16, Ateliers et Presses de Taizé, 2011, p. 3, 23.

⁵ Sylvie Barnay, "La rétrospective de l'oeuvre de Simon Hantaï. L'image acheiropoiète au seuil du XXIème siècle" in *Etudes* n°4205, Paris, Assas – Bayard, 2014, p. 83, 75.

⁶ Simon Hantaï, Jean-Luc Nancy, *Jamais le mot « créateur »...* (*Correspondance 2000-2008*), Paris, Galilée, 2013, p. 153-154.

powerful, we are talking about a different kind of power; if he is love, his capacity to love is different, etc. In this case, the figure in the icon is never a representation. Not that representation is forbidden, but rather – and this is why Simon Hantaï abstained from it – that it lacks in interest as it is inappropriate to fulfill the expected goal.

For the art of representation entails an entirely different way of relating differences. Perspective emerged, and with it, the fence that perspective introduces. Perspective does not open up onto heaven, the netherworld, or whatever on Earth is not immediately perceptible, but onto society, such or such human society, with its hierarchies, power systems, frictions and specific struggles. The depth of field settles inside the figurative art piece whereas iconic art work was opening up the possibility of a relational depth that it did not contain. But – and this is the paradox – by being formed directly on the work, perspective is stabilized. For it is a mimetic perspective: it reproduces the socio-political setup. Just as a minister is only the representative of a sovereign who is oh-so-much-more superior to him, everything that is represented refers to a space organized and ordered by predefined social references. Pictorial and architectural conception depends on the political vision of the social system. In this way, the arts of representation necessitate, just as much as they refer to, a system of castes. The monocular centrist perspective transforms whoever gazes upon the abstract or the inaccessible in sacred art (concreteness consisted in the materialisation of a relationship with the divine presence) into a specific social being.

Las Meninas (1656) would be both the paragon and the mise en abîme of such a system. On the one hand, perspective on Diego Velasquez's canvas assigns to the gaze a symbolic location, and to the spectator a precise spot where to remain inside the society structure. On the other hand, to cite the magisterial analysis of this painting by Michel Foucault, "representation is represented in each of its moments" in such a way that the hierarchical centre designated by the lines of perspective becomes an "ambiguous spot marked by an unending, flashing alternation between the painter,

the sovereign [painted by the painter]"⁷ and the spectator. But remains the fact that there is only one place from which to gaze.



Modern art modifies this relationship by allowing multiple simultaneous gazes – a kind of vision ubiquity. Through *Les Femmes d'Alger (O. J. Version O)* (1911), Pablo Picasso shows a juxtaposition of female body parts, each sketched from a different angle. The novelty, in relation to the previous paradigm, lies in this: apart from the multiplicity of simultaneous views, no hierarchical separation distinguishes anymore the foreground from the background, the left from the right, etc. For all gazes structuring the canvas' composition are those cast by the artist. True, the space is broken and fragmented, but this is according to the artist's perception order. It is no longer gods, nor society that commands but the artist himself.

Much has been said on the artistic field autonomisation (rendering of autonomy)⁸. It is not incorrect. But perhaps it is even appropriate, in order to grasp the poetic and aesthetic stakes of this autonomisation, to hazard a different formulation, a formulation that combines two terms that are almost too familiar, calling upon them for their purely literal meanings: "expressionism" and "impressionism"⁹. The modern artist's priority is no longer to call on the gods on high or from behind, nor to represent society and the depth of focus of its monarchic structure, but to express one's own impressions about the world – about one's world.

It is not by accident if, on one of the walls of the exhibition dedicated to the work of Marc Chagall at the Musée du Palais du Luxembourg in Paris in 2013, the following analysis was made: "the images construct a world that is neither a fiction nor an imitation of the real world but that instead constitutes the expression of the artist's subjectivity"¹⁰. The modern artist communicates his own vision of the world – a possibility excluded by the figurative regime of the arts but also the sacred regime where icons "do not aim to express the vision or personality of the artist as an individual"¹¹.

⁷ Michel Foucault, *Les mots et les choses*, Paris, Gallimard (Tel), 1966, p. 333-334.

⁸ Cf. Pierre Bourdieu, *Les règles de l'art. Genèse et structure du champ et littéraire*, Paris, Seuil, 1992, p. 76, 96, 121-129.

⁹ The expression "abstract art" is confusing for what is sought after is precisely the materiality of the elements at hand. If there is abstraction, it is only in relation to representation – the artist disregards the imperative to represent. Piet Mondrian preferred the notion of *realist-abstract art*.

¹⁰ In the room called "Towards the dream", *Chagall, entre guerre et paix* exhibition, Paris, Musée du Luxembourg, 2013. My emphasis.

¹¹ Br. Jean-Marc, *Les icônes, op. cit.*, p. 3.

At the risk of making a poor pun, one might say that “perspective” changed entirely at this point. When Pier Paolo Pasolini in *Orgia* (1968) or Arno Schmidt in *Leviathan* (1949) express the impression that the world produces upon them, a world of vertiginous desires for the first, a world radically empty of meaning for the second, whatever this world is, it is not the object of a reference. The art work does not refer to the world but to itself – that means to the artist who is its author. This is a concrete implication of the autonomisation of the art field to which I was alluding: as the practice becomes autonomous, the product of this practice (the expression of the impression) also becomes autonomous.

Jacques Villon noted that thanks to Cubism, “the painting stopped looking as an open window [to the world] and became a thing in itself¹²”. Modernity relies on a reassessment of the status of the art work that becomes the very location of all apparitions whereas the figurative art work was the representation of an external social reality. Here lies the great epistemological change worked by modernity. If the reference location of sacred art was elsewhere (heaven, hell, the beyond that is nonetheless here) and if that of figurative art was in society, that of expressionist-impressionist art originates in the art form itself – understood as the product of a work created by a specific individual, namely an author-artist. We shift thus from gods to kings, and then to artists – and not to the people as attested by Jacques Rancière in his analysis of the emergence of art for art following the French Revolution. Up to this point, the sovereign – of art – has never been the people. The aesthetic efficiency of the *expressionist-impressionist* form depends directly on its degree of self-referencing: Paul Gauguin’s *Manao tupapau* (1892) or Gustav Klimt’s *The Kiss* (1908-1909), and even more literally Egon Schiele’s *Self Portrait with Raised Bare Shoulder* (1912) only produce their effects when we impregnate ourselves in the impressions expressed by the artist.

¹² Cited in Pierre Cabanne, *Le Cubisme*, Paris, PUF, 1982, p. 42.

The switch to *presentative arts* or *arts of presenting* happens when the reference location ceases to be the art piece – and its

¹³ | According to Claude Simon, it was from Cézanne onwards that such a dynamic began slowly to operate. The painter of *Le Pont de la rivière aux trois sources* (watercolour, 1906), *Les Baigneuses* (watercolour, 1900-1906) or *Cabanon de Jourdan* (oil, 1906) was, says the writer, the first to have "placed here and there, at key points, a few smears between which the spectator is invited to grasp relationships by jumping directly from one to another, separated only by the canvas' virgin surface." Claude Simon, "L'absente de tous bouquets" in *Quatre Conférences*, Paris, Minuit, 2012, p. 56. I myself will not take the risk of dating the passage precisely.

¹⁴ | For more details on the forms taken by this combination and the nature of component elements, cf. in this issue, p. 88-99: Denis Guénoun, Jean-Frédéric Chevallier, "Assemblage théâtral et assemblée planétaire"; and, p. 147-151: Jean-Frédéric Chevallier, "How to pass from one image to another ?". See also: Jean-Frédéric Chevallier, "La crise est finie" in *Registres n°14*, Paris, Presses de la Sorbonne Nouvelle, p. 38-41.

¹⁵ | Jean-François Lyotard, "Le sublime et l'avant-garde" in *L'inhumain*, Paris, Galilée, 1988, p. 112.

¹⁶ | Cf. in this issue, p. 76-79: Joseph Danan, "Castellucci parmi les Papes".

¹⁷ | Joseph Danan explained, after seeing Romeo Castellucci's *Inferno*: "The spectator comes back from there (from Hell) with a sum of impressions and sensations wholly comparable to a lived experience. His thought makes it his own and will accompany him for years or throughout a lifetime. [Experience] demands to be lived in the present, but its value is measured by the trace it leaves behind." *Ibid.*

¹⁸ | Nicolas Bourriaud, *Esthétique relationnelle*, Paris, Les presses du réel, 2001, p. 62, 63.

¹⁹ | But with a difference in scale: the effect is not the sensation, or rather, when it is, the effect carries little importance. Kant, for example, talks of the importance of drawing in painting, sculpture, architecture and gardening. Emmanuel Kant, *Critique de la faculté de juger*, tr. A. Philonenko, Paris, Vrin, 1984, p. 67.

author – but moves and constitutes itself in the mind of each spectator¹³ – whatever the latter's position in society. The artist no longer seeks, as Nathalie Sarraute did in relation to her readers, to communicate (her own) specific impressions regarding the world; he attempts to produce – by the combination and organization of heterogeneous elements¹⁴ – not predetermined sensations in the present body of the spectator in such a way that the latter comes to recompose, in his own manner, the meaning in being there, present. "The artist tries out combinations that enable the event¹⁵". This is for example what is produced by the combination of a director who speaks and the dogs that bite him in Romeo Castellucci's *Inferno* (2008)¹⁶. Sometimes, the spectators may go on to produce thought and even to engage in action – thought consisting in thinking about action, projecting it before it is realized, with the *virtual* of the action becoming the *actual* of the thought.

Returning to Walter Benjamin's notions of 'aura' and 'distance', Nicolas Bourriaud notes that everything now occurs "as if this 'unique apparition of a distance' that is the artistic aura came to be supplied by the public: as if the micro-community gathering before the piece of art became the very source of the 'aura', the 'distance' occasionally appearing to crown the art piece that delegates its powers to it. Contemporary art therefore works a radical shift compared to modern art, in that it does not deny the aura of the work of art, but displaces its origin and effect¹⁸". The idea of an effect to be produced is not new, I mentioned it before: from Aristotle's *Poetics* to Kant's *Critique of Judgment*, this issue permeates art¹⁹. The difference here resides in the fact that effect finds, in a certain way, its origin as well as its space to expand, in the mind of the present spectator.

2, 2, 3, 8

We therefore speak of:

1. an *iconic regime* (convocation of the divine or invitation to a relationship with the divine; if the work has no depth of field, it is because it urges another form of digging; the artist is an intermediary whose duty is to fade away);

2. a *figurative regime* (representation of a society; the depth of field reproduces the social thickness; the artist is an ideological collaborator or a political critic);

3. an *aesthetic regime* (communication of an impression of the world; the multiplicity of visions stems from the artist who becomes an aesthetic subject having full power over his means);

4. a *spiritual regime* (the production of sensation in the spirit of the spectator, the latter becoming the very seat of art production); and if there is still depth in this fourth regime, it comes from the fact that it is the spectator who becomes the poet.

Despite taking a somewhat different path, we arrive at, for the first three regimes in any case, a categorization quite close to the one put forward by Jacques Rancière. This philosopher distinguishes “in the Western tradition three great regimes of identification”: an “ethical regime of images”, a “poetic – or representative – regime of the arts” and an “aesthetic regime”²⁰. Regarding the fourth, Jacques Rancière alludes to its possibility when he then mentions “the regimes of palpable presentation”²¹. He sometimes even seems to describe exactly the dynamic. But publicly at least, he refuses to talk of what I call a *presentative regime* or *arts of presenting*²².

We also note an undeniable complicity with Jean-François Lyotard who, to broach manners of producing art in the 20th century, distinguished between the dynamic of “realism” (*figurative regime*), that of “the avant-garde” (*aesthetic regime*) and that of “the postmodern” (*presentative regime*), blatantly criticizing the first and perceiving the third as a radicalization of the second. But if he continually insists on the importance of experimentation, he circumscribes it to “sublime” experimentation of the “unpresentable” in “presentation”²³. However, the singularity of the experience that concerns us does not lie exactly here. If, as Marianne Massin suggests, “certain contemporary art propositions contribute to deep renewal of the idea of aesthetic experience”²⁴, it is because they lead to migration from the place where we produce – aesthetically speaking and “in depth” – this experience:

²⁰ Cf. Jacques Rancière, “Des régimes de l’art et du faible intérêt de la notion de modernité” in *Le partage du sensible*, Paris, La Fabrique, 2000, p. 26-37.

²¹ Jacques Rancière, “Les paradoxes de l’art politique” in *Le spectateur émancipé*, Paris, La Fabrique, 2008, p. 85. We can also envisage these regimes in relation to different modes of art production and distribution. See, regarding the graphic arts: Laurent Wolf, “Art Basel, une marque mondiale prend les commandes” in *Etudes n°4208*, Paris, Assas – Bayard, 2014, p. 95-99. And see, regarding “contemporary art”: Nathalie Heinich, *Le paradigme de l’art contemporain. Structure d’une révolution artistique*, Paris, Gallimard, 2014.

²² When, at the end of a lecture he gave at the Palais de Tokyo, in Paris, in June 2013, I asked Jacques Rancière about it, he immediately –and vehemently– reacted against the idea that the artist would have, *stricto sensu*, nothing to say to his spectators.

²³ Cf. Jean-François Lyotard “Réponse à la question : qu’est-ce que le postmoderne ?” in *Le postmoderne expliqué aux enfants*, Paris, Galilée, 1988, p. 9-28.

²⁴ Marianne Massin, *Expérience esthétique et art contemporain*, Rennes, PUR, 2013, p. 8.

into spirit. What we name contemporary art is art when it participates in a *spiritual regime*.

3 + 9, 9 + 8

We could just as easily speak of a psychic regime. When Pina Bausch stands up for the idea that her work consists in selecting the movements “that touch people”, she insists on the fact that the ultimate criterion concerns “the way to be set in motion, stirred, moved on the inside²⁵”. In other words: if, on stage, we choose to perform one physical movement (taking off one’s hat, telling a sentence, smiling, remaining silent, etc.), it is because this movement can potentially produce a psychic movement in the spectator’s spirit. Deleuze points this out as well: the movement of Psyche is proof of the effectiveness of Physics’ movement.

And inversely, there can be no spiritual drifting without anchoring in the here and now of palpable experience. This is why I have been speaking about the *arts of presenting*. If these arts participate in a *spiritual regime*, it is because they operate in a presentative manner. Concretely speaking: when, facing the work that he looks at, listens to, reads, etc., the spectator is present (available) to the present moment (here and now), the present (what is presented) offers itself up to him as a present (a gift) – and it is at that point that the spectator may be “moved on the inside”. Presentation in this way is a guaranty for spiritualisation to take place.

But we are not talking about the presentation of a spiritual interiority (which may be one of the ways of operating under the *expressionist-impressionist regime*). Art is not, as Hegel suggested, the tangible presentation of the Idea of an Artist’s Spirit (with capital letters). We are outside any kind of mimesis. Under the *presentative regime*, the geometry of the process is inverted and the operator (the mimesis) disappears: the spirit (the spectator’s Psyche) intervenes last of all. If it is the palpable presentation that sets this spirit in motion, the operation participates in neither identification, nor empathy, nor receiving messages...²⁶

However, these four moments in art are not to be isolated from one another. In practice, it is not rare to observe a superposition of two regimes. This was already the case a few decades ago: “obvious similarities existed between the ‘enveloping effect’ of abstract expressionism and what the painter of icons was seeking²⁷”.

This was also the case a few years ago in *Giulio Cesare* (1997) by Romeo Castellucci – a theatre production that was both “modern art” and “contemporary art”. For if the director shared his impressions on his reading of Shakespeare’s tragedy, this sharing gave birth, on the stage, to the appearance of elements (a white horse skeleton, the back of a fleshy man, etc.) whose arrangement functioned on a purely presentative mode – directly producing effects on spectators without forcing them to first understand how these elements were the product of an artist’s impressions upon his reading of a Shakespearean tragedy...

Two and even three distinct regimes are also woven together in many advertising “works”. Here, the prescriptive character of representation exceeds to a great extent the mere social assignation specific to the *figurative regime*. The advertising “work” participates rather in an *expressionism-impressionism* rendered arrogant by the power of money. Representation is used so to become the vision about the world that the advertiser intends to impose – issuing to us, audience, the order, if we want to be happy, to make our mind and submit to this vision... The creative team leader of McCann, Rohan Ghose was insisting recently on the necessity of “exploring deeper the public psyche²⁸” – i.e. to shape the mind.

2 - 8, 9 - 8

Other than these superpositions of two distinct regimes, there are also permutations between regimes. In this case, a work produced under one art regime is apprehended by spectators in conditions such that it operates as an

²⁵ | Guy Delahaye, Jean-Marc Adolphe, Michel Bataillon, *Pina Bausch*, Arles, Actes Sud, 2009, p. 25. My underlining.

²⁶ | In this respect, the fears expressed by Marianne Massin regarding the threats weighing upon the very possibility of palpable experience in contemporary art are far too Hegelian. There is no threat of destruction but a condition of possibility. Cf. Marianne Massin, *op. cit.*, p. 12. Jean-François Lyotard also emphasized this at the start and the conclusion of “Réponse à la question : qu’est-ce que le postmoderne ?”, *art. cit.*

²⁷ | Nicolas Bourriaud, *Esthétique relationnelle*, *op. cit.*, p. 83-84.

²⁸ | Cf. Nettle Mitra, “Resurgence of the storytellers”, in *Tehelka* n°14, New Delhi, Anant Media, 2015, p. 45.

entirely different regime. In *Les amoureux en vert* (1916-1917) by Marc Chagall, the presence of the green color (presentation) dominates the portrait of the bridal couple (representation). The aesthetic effect of this green irradiating from the faces of the man and woman is such that we finally spend little time on the second (representation) and linger on the first (presentation).

Similarly, how do we today look at Jackson Pollack's *Autumn Rhythm* painted in 1950? Or else, how do we perceive the title *Parcours* (1984) of Jean Dubuffet's painting? Hasn't this *Parcours* ceased to be the journey (parcour) of the artist looking at the world to become that of the spectator looking at the canvas?

5 + 9 + 8

There are also more complex arrangements in which three or even four different regimes cohabit and/or permute. In the ephemeral temples (*pandles*) set up every year in Calcutta to celebrate the goddess Durga, exhibited works (for we can see genuine artistic installations) participate in the *presentative*, *iconic* and *expressionist-impressionist* regimes at once. Humorously, certainly, but also rightly, Pradip Kumar Bose speaks here of an "enormous postmodern expo"²⁹.

Firstly, the spatial arrangement – the texture of walls, the choice of lights, sound, the length and shape of the entrance space, etc. – tends to directly produce sensations on the spectators' minds (several tens of thousands every night³⁰). Pradip Kumar Bose also observes that presence is brought into play in a "transitory, floating, ephemeral" manner by "a meeting of different elements without any of them, if they were to be considered separately, holding any particular meaning" and without this meeting participating in a "grammar of causality"³¹. In short, this is a case of the *presentative regime*.

Next, the sculptures or paintings that represent, or perhaps one should say designate the goddess Durga exterminating, with a strike of a lance, the monstrous Ashura, obviously aim to recall, in the city for a ten-day period, the presence of the divinity.

In the middle of an unending brouhaha, despite police efforts to make sure that visitors flow through quickly and continually, a few visitors manage to worship for a few seconds. This is therefore within the *iconic regime*.

Finally, these designations or representations are less and less "representative" as the years go by, and increasingly reveal the impressions made by divinities on the artists and craftsmen shaping the sculptures. Here is a slip towards "modern art", all the more interesting as many sculptors and painters engaged in the process are not of Hindu faith but of Muslim faith: the divinities that they fashion and decorate so uniquely have absolutely no religious meaning for them (firstly, they are not from their own religion, and secondly, sculpting their own god or prophet would be an aberration for them).

We can also interrogate ourselves whether the strength that is still contained in Gustave Courbet's *L'Origine du monde* today comes from a type of telescoping of the four artistic regimes – the perspective vision of a vagina not having anything strictly to do with society (thus limiting the application of the *figurative regime*) opens up, on the contrary, infinite possibilities of plays between regimes, including the first one.

8 = 5 + 2 + 9 + 8

It is however the emergence of a fourth artistic regime that marks the greatest change – and notably because this fourth regime neither denies nor evacuates the three others. We might well say – if we agree with Jean-François Lyotard, that "postmodernism is not modernism at its end, but in its birth state, and this state is constant", that postmodernism is "that which enquires about new presentations"³² and if we recall that Lyotard himself subsequently rejected that word³³ – that the *presentative art regime* is postmodern because it consists in resumption (repetition forward in the Kierkegaardian sense) of the dynamic induced by the introduction of the term "aesthetic" by Baumgarten in 1735 and above all by Kant, in 1790, in the third *Critique*³⁴.

²⁹ Pradip Kumar Bose, "The Heterotopia of Puja's Calcutta", tr. Manas Ray, in *Memory's Gold*, ed. Amit Chaudhuri, New Delhi, Penguin, 2008, p. 293.

³⁰ An important fact here deserves further study: these aesthetic choices are the fruits of discussions in neighbors committees, each committee being responsible for an ephemeral temple set up in its own area. Cf. in this issue, p. 28-31: Samantak Das, "Durga Puja : l'autre visage de Calcutta".

³¹ Pradip Kumar Bose, "The Heterotopia of Puja's Calcutta", *art. cit.*, p. 301.

³² Jean-François Lyotard, *L'inhumain. Causerie sur le temps*, Paris, Galilée, 1988, p. 24, 26.

³³ "The term *postmodern* has served, for the worse rather than for the better judging from results, to designate something of this transformation." Jean-François Lyotard, *L'inhumain. Causerie sur le temps*, *op. cit.*, p. 13. Lyotard's underlining.

³⁴ Cf. Marianne Bassin, *Expérience esthétique et art contemporain*, *op. cit.*, p. 22-23.

And this resumption turns upside down the relationships established by the arts and the role given to artists: what counts is no longer the capacity of the latter to criticize social rigidities head-on or the will to share their personal impressions (and a certain ideological understanding of them: remember Eisenstein's *Battleship Potemkin* (1925)) but the desire to awake in everyone singular sensations, diverse one from the other, sensations that are free from ideology. It is no longer the placing in perspective nor the expression that are of primary interest, but the aesthetic capacity to produce an awakening of senses so that expression is then born – and perhaps also critical thought. If what we look at is no longer what the artist seeks to express, it is because the question of expression (including critical expression) has passed onto the side of the spectators. These are the ones who express themselves ultimately. So we might say: aesthetics to the artist, poetics (and politics?) to the spectators!

³⁵ | I suspect that Fabrice Midale is not entirely honest when he calls – or else prognosticates – a maintenance of art in modernity. I wonder if defense of this notion is not a simple refusal to mourn the loss of certain prerogatives specific to the *modern* artist. Indeed, Midale defends the idea that there must always be something “truly intentional” in the work of art. Cf. Fabrice Midale, *Comprendre l'art moderne*, Paris, Pocket, 2010, p. 240, 244-245. We could make a similar reproach regarding Nicolas Bourriaud even if his view is almost the opposite of that of Midale [Cf. Fabrice Midale, *Comprendre l'art moderne*, *op. cit.*, p. 242.] when he states, mainly against Deleuze, that “to completely be a work of art, the work should offer concepts necessary to the functioning of these affects and percepts” that it produces [Nicolas Bourriaud, *op. cit.*, p. 105]. Similarly, in the conclusion of *Radicant*, Nicolas Bourriaud raises the maintenance of art in modernity as a duty. Cf. Nicolas Bourriaud, *Radicant*, Paris, Denoël, 2008.

³⁶ | In this sense, an element of representation remains in the *expressionist-impressionist regime*. To a certain degree, expression requires representation.

³⁷ | Gilles Deleuze, *Critique et clinique*, Paris, Minuit, 1993, p. 171.

³⁸ | Br. Jean-Marc, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

It is important to say, to recall, to insist, for this entails, it seems, a considerable swing that one cannot yet fully measure³⁵. Passing from representation to presentation is not just a matter of passing from figuration of a world to the materiality of a form (until here most critics will agree), but it is also (and here is where they will diverge) passing from communication of the impressions of the one who makes the work to the production of sensations by those who watch, listen or read his work³⁶. It is also a process of making sense, something that arises and no longer something that is convoked (*sacred arts*), imparted (*figurative arts*) or communicated (*impressionistic arts*). The artist must be reminded that “power is modest, at the opposite of pretension³⁷” and that it is precisely the power of the arts that is in question. The spectator must be invited “to content himself with being there, in all simplicity³⁸”. It is a matter of humility, for one – the artist – as for the other – the spectator.

Jean-Frédéric Chevallier, born in France in 1973, is somehow stuck with two numbers: 2 and 3. The number 2, not only because Jean-Frédéric Chevallier could never make up his mind and choose between living in a city or living in a village, but above all because he spends his work time playing a kind of ping pong game between theory and practice. If he writes essays about contemporary arts, he also stages experimental theatre performances where the "presentation" (to present and to be present) overrules the "representation" (to represent and to be represented); if he gives lectures or classes on these topics or about continental philosophy and aesthetics, he also directs film-essays. And the number 3, not only because he is trained in philosophy, sociology and theatrical studies (master degrees) and combined the three to produce his Ph.D., but above all because he lived in France first, till he was 27 or 29 (he has since forgotten), then in Mexico, till age 35, and third now in India, and because in these three places he has co-founded and impulse collective groups of artists and researchers from different social backgrounds: Feu Faux Lait in 1992, Proyecto 3 in 2002 and Trimukhi Platform since 2008.

We usually believe that it is the spider that spins its web, but it might be also the web appearing in the early morning light that makes the spider work. After all, what do we know about it? Similarly, doesn't the Trimukhi Cultural Centre in Borotalpada weave a network of relationships between Santhal peasants, artists and intellectuals from Calcutta, Mexican, Colombian or French project designers and children playing at the edge of the village forest? So let us be weaved together by the Cultural Centre in progress: to each one his part, his time, those who knead the clay, those who bring their thousand rupees, those who draw the plans, those who impulse, those who are still travelling and those who dance already. The first work of this Centre is the fabric of emotion, intelligence, generosity and dreams that makes shine this little piece of world under the light of a new dawn.

— Marc Hatzfeld

*Marc Hatzfeld is a French anthropologist.
He has visited Borotalpada three times.*

Il nous arrive de croire que c'est l'araignée qui tisse sa toile, mais n'est-ce pas, à l'inverse, la toile qui jaillit à la lumière du petit matin en faisant travailler l'araignée ? Après tout qu'en savons-nous ? De même, n'est-ce pas ce Centre Culturel de Trimukhi à Borotalpada qui tresse un réseau de relations fragiles et porteuses de devenirs entre des paysans santhals, des artistes et intellectuels de Calcutta, des concepteurs colombiens, mexicains ou français et des enfants qui jouent à la lisière de la forêt ? Laissons-nous donc tisser ensemble par le Centre Culturel en devenir : chacun sa part, chacun son temps, ceux qui pétrissent la glaise, ceux qui apportent leurs cinquante euros, ceux qui dessinent les plans, ceux qui impulsent, ceux qui voyagent encore et ceux qui dansent déjà. La première œuvre de ce Centre est bien le tissu d'émotion, d'intelligence, de générosité et de songe qui fait briller ce petit morceau du monde à la lumière d'un autre matin.

— Marc Hatzfeld

*Marc Hatzfeld est un anthropologue français.
Il a séjourné à Borotalpada à trois reprises.*



Trimukhi Cultural Centre

a place takes place

un lieu a lieu

Once the monsoon was over, the construction of Trimukhi Cultural Centre started in Borotalpada village. It was on 28th October 2011, after almost a year of talks, usually in the form of village assemblies. A piece of land was chosen. The place was cleaned and a Santhal ritual was performed. A first draft was marked on the ground with ropes and later on with ashes. Thus the foundations were dug.

Eighteen families with whom Trimukhi Platform was involved since 2008 became part of the organisation. Sharing their traditional knowledge, they worked on the building during their free time.

In April 2012, a thatch was installed on a bamboo structure.

In October 2013, Trimukhi Cultural Centre got badly damaged by Cyclone Phailin. Repairing started on 6th January 2014. By the end of July 2014, all the walls were repaired and the installation of a tin roof on the top of the building completed. In December 2015, the room, originally intended to be an office, was pulled down to be converted into a platform. A Trimukhi platform.

Usually such a cultural platform is built in a "posh" area and in a big city. Here, the aim is to do exactly the opposite: to situate the Centre in a remote village with no particular economic resources, to create at the far periphery a place for contemporary art practices. And to do it in such a way that those who coordinate this platform are those who habitually do not coordinate anything because they are peripheral peoples.

Dans le village de Borotalpada, la construction du centre culturel a débuté une fois la saison des pluies terminée. C'était le 28 octobre 2011, après presque un an de discussions, le plus souvent sous la forme d'assemblées de village. Un bout de terrain avait été choisi, le lieu débroussaillé et un rituel santhal réalisé. Une première esquisse était tracée au sol à l'aide de cordeaux puis de cendres. Les fondations étaient creusées.

Dix-huit familles avec lesquelles Trimukhi Platform était en lien depuis 2008 intégrèrent l'association. Partageant leur savoir traditionnel, elles travaillèrent ensemble à la construction du bâtiment.

En avril 2012, un toit de paille de riz était posé sur une structure en bambou.

En octobre 2013, le centre fut endommagé par le passage d'un cyclone. Les réparations commencèrent le 6 janvier 2014. A la fin du mois juillet, tous les murs avaient été surélevés et l'installation d'un toit de tôle achevée. En décembre 2015, la pièce attenante, supposée devenir un bureau, était déconstruite pour être transformée en plateforme, une plateforme trimukhienne.

Souvent, les plateformes culturelles sont situées dans les beaux quartiers et dans les grandes villes. Là, il s'est agi de faire l'exact inverse : situer le centre dans un village reculé et sans ressource, ouvrir à la périphérie un lieu consacré aux pratiques artistiques contemporaines. Et de le faire de telle sorte que ceux qui coordonnent une telle plateforme soient précisément ceux-là qui habituellement ne coordonnent rien parce qu'ils sont, telles les populations tribales en Inde, des personnes périphériques.



Night of Theatre

Nuit du Théâtre

The Night of Theatre is an annual event first produced by Proyecto3 in Mexico and then by Trimukhi Platform in India. Since 2012, the night-long festival has taken place in the Santhal village of Borotalpada, 220 kms south west of Kolkata, where Trimukhi Platform has been building a Cultural Centre together with the villagers. Artists from India, Europe, North and South America work together with tribal actors, dancers and musicians to prepare theatre, music and dance performances, photo exhibitions, video projections, sound and/or visual installations that they showcase throughout the night.

The Night of Theatre is the occasion for discovering singular art propositions and for widening the field of sensory experiences: a concrete way to reconsider the world, the many worlds and the many others who inhabited them.

La Nuit du Théâtre est un événement annuel, produit de 2002 à 2009 par Proyecto 3 au Mexique et ensuite par Trimukhi Platform en Inde. Depuis 2012, ce festival a lieu dans le village santhal de Borotalpada, au Bengale Occidentale, 220 kilomètres au sud-ouest de Calcutta, où Trimukhi Platform a construit avec les villageois un centre culturel. Des artistes d'Inde, d'Europe, d'Amérique du Nord et du Sud travaillent avec des acteurs, danseurs et musiciens tribaux à la préparation de performances théâtrales, pièces chorégraphiques, expositions de photographies, projections vidéo, installations visuelles et/ou sonores qu'ils présentent tout au long de la nuit.

La Nuit du Théâtre est l'occasion de découvrir des propositions artistiques singulières et, par là, d'ouvrir grand le champ des expériences sensibles : une manière concrète de reconsidérer le monde, les mondes, et tous ces autres qui les habitent.

त्रिमूर्ती PLATFORM

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