

# SYNCHRONOUS

The exhibition of Marc Rossignol at the Annie Gentiles Gallery is called "synchronous".

The artist indeed claims to adhere to time. The presented paintings in acrylic are even marked with the month in which they were made. He thinks that Time is Space in mutation, and Space, is Time momentarily resting. With two hands he paints signs based on an Indian Kolam called "lotus flower". Hindus believe that drawing this kolam in one go without lifting the hand is religiously beneficial. The exhibition of M. Rossignol also links Monet's last work to this Kolam

"When Monet in 1890-93 conceives his water garden which in itself, in its spatial structure and its character of microcosm, is the prefiguration of the decoration to come, (The nymphéas (water-lilies) of the Orangerie), he was, for ten years or so, no longer satisfied with the purely retinal vision. He aspires to a representation that incorporates into the visual experience the experience of duration, and beyond that, the totality of the experience experienced, by the eyes, by all the senses, by the movement, by the subjective sensibility, the intuition, the "immediate data of consciousness" ... Pierre Georgel

The "great machine" of Monet consists of paintings arranged continuously on two adjacent ellipses, forming, as such, the infinity sign on the ground.

Rossignol explores in this exhibition the last work of Monet, its conception, its colors. The practice of Kolam in India may vary from day to day according to the god to be honored and historians consider these historical traces as a form of proto-writing.

The first day of the year zero of the Hindu calendar corresponds to January 23, 3102 BC. The year 1440 of the Muslim calendar will begin on Sept. 12th 2018 and end in August 2019. The different conceptions of time create different histories and lead to a different understanding of how time unfolds. In the exhibition a series of 12 paintings begins in May 2017 and ends in April 2018. Classical Chinese artists consider Time as Space in mutation, and Space as Time momentarily resting. One must therefore connect times and places to have an exhibition in the form of a constellation.

KOLAMS

Kolams are surviving images. For many historians, they originate from a pre-Aryan farming society in India. This society was matriarchal and even today it is the women who practice the kolam, that is to say, drawings with rice flour on the floor. These floor drawings have magic powers. The Aryans, herders, have transformed Indian society which became patriarchal, but have kept the practice of Kolam by integrating it into their rituals to connect with native populations. The practice of Kolam in India may vary from day to day according to the god to be honored and historians consider these historical traces as a form of proto-writing.

I was particularly interested in the Kolam called "IDAYAK KAMLAM". "Idayam" means "Heart", the word "Kamalam" means "Lotus". It involves connecting 40 equidistant points on two diagonals and two medians of a square. The line connecting these 40 points, passes once through each of these points and ends where it started. I have worked out that there are 24 possible solutions.

I then classified these 24 courses and found that 12 of these courses were symmetrical to the 12 possible courses remaining. It was an opportunity for me since I appreciate simultaneous drawing with both hands. So I traced with both hands these two times 12 figures in algebraic order.

I subsequently classified the 12 figures obtained in this way, from the smallest to the largest area covered by these different figures, but also from the largest central heart to the smallest.

The algebraic classification, the classification by surfaces, the classification by heart do not coincide, they diverge, I therefore decided to attribute to each of the 12 figures the representation of one of the 12 months.

*The paintings illustrating this text presents classifications from top to bottom and from right to left.*

## The nymphs.

The fateful year 1914 begins for Monet with a big flu (...) In early February he has recovered, but it is to witness the agony of Jean, his eldest son. However, in April, he wrote to Geffroy: "I even intend to undertake great things, of which you will see old attempts that I've found in a basement." This letter puts an end to all the speculations on the elaboration of the "Great Decorations": it is chance or at least a lucky find, that caused the resurgence of forgotten sketches of former days, undoubtedly those mentioned by M. Guillemot in 1898, the sight of which bolsters Monet's irrevocable resolution to give in to an already old temptation, by realizing an extensive decorative program. Thus, apart from a few old paintings, the capital work, conceived on the eve of the war and which will occupy the last years of Monet's existence, did not begin to be executed before May 1914.

Bravo ! The Great Water Lilies are wonderful targets for shooting schools!... This joke of questionable taste attributed to Renoir gives a good account of the influence of the First World War on the spirit of those who lived it. (...) From the day after the armistice, Monet announced to Clemenceau his intention to offer to the State, through him, two decorative panels that he is about to finish and that he intends to sign the day of the victory. The negotiations with the State are well underway at the beginning of 1920 since the principle of the purchase of "Women in the Garden", imposed by the artist in exchange for the free gift of the Décoration, is now approved. The Orangery ends up being chosen as a place of permanent exhibition, on the walls of two successive ellipses which remain to be built. The deed of donation is signed in April 1922.

According to the contract, the first room will consist of eight panels of 4,25 m and a single one of 6 m arranged as follows: on the sides, Setting Sun, the panel of 6 m, to the west, and, on the opposite side Green Reflections, a diptych of 8,50 m; on each of the long sides, a triptych of 12,75 m, The Clouds, to the north, and, facing it, Morning. The second room will have six panels of 4,25 m and four of 6 m grouped as follows: on the small side set against the first room, Reflections of Trees, a diptych of 8,50 m and on the opposite side, The Three Willows, a polyptych of 17 m; on each of the long sides, a diptych of 12 m, Morning and Morning without distinction of titles.

In 1926, Monet completes the realization of the different panels. He dies on December 5 of the same year. The Fine Arts Administration has the panels installed during the first few months of 1927. The inauguration and the opening to the public can take place from mid May. The work immediately enters a long purgatory whose effects are noted by Clemenceau: "I went to the Orangerie yesterday, he says in

June 7 1928. There was absolutely no one ... "

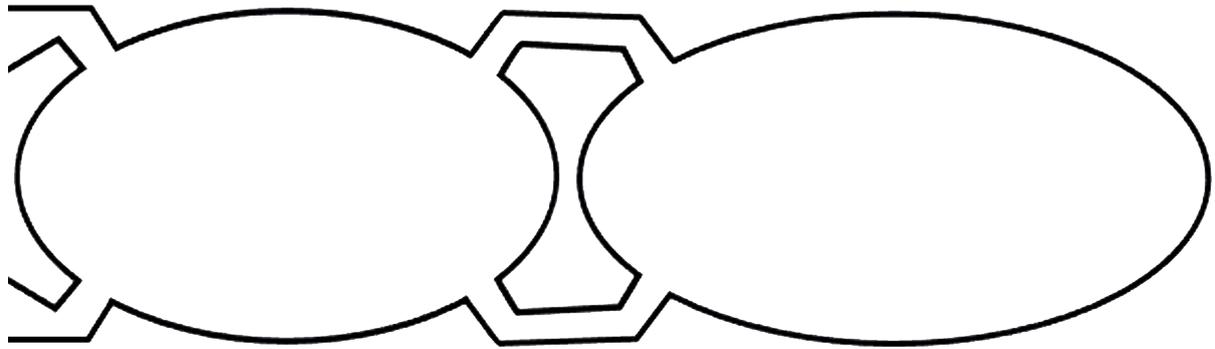
(From "Monet or the triumph of Impressionism" by Daniel Wildenstein.)

The Parisian malaise of the years 1920-1923 and the disgust of the younger generation seem to have been linked to a painful reality: art no longer interested anybody. In Europe people focused on the settlement of the conflict, the punishment of Germany, the reconstruction, the memory of fathers, sons and brothers missing. The avant-garde, in Paris, had perhaps closed itself off from the dialog with the outside, engulfed in school quarrels, deaf to the social, economic, but also terribly human urgencies of the moment, Monet, the great representative of French modern art, was offering his *Nymphéas* to the fatherland. The old Fauves became figures of patriotism, like Derain, or isolated themselves under the Mediterranean sun like Matisse. The Cubists painted for the rich. The Purists claimed the succession of Cubism, returning to an art accessible to all. But is it by painting a compass bottle that one would touch the hearts of the men and women of the early 1920s? The younger generation pushed back into the margins, like Miro, Masson, Dubuffet, embraced a poetic art, spoke of suffering, of futures and very dark presents. They already looked, like Dubuffet, to the weakest, the insane, the misunderstood. But who was still reading poetry? Who was interested in the most fragile? *Les avant-gardes artistiques 1918-1945 , une histoire transnationale (The artistic avant-garde 1918-1945, a transnational history)*. Béatrice Joyeux –Prunel pp 69

The West no longer had confidence in itself, a sentiment headed by Surrealism. This withdrawal can be observed in abstract and surrealist avant-garde circles, to the point that some historians have wanted to emphasize the similitude of this atmosphere to that of the later years of the Vichy regime. Without going as far as these unconvincing conclusions, there is in any case a generalized atmosphere of anxiety, such as a disorientation and a loss of hope and fighting spirit that still animated the avant-gardes of the 1920s. These theories of decline were all the more important precisely because they were modern, as Laurence Bertrand-Dorléac rightly pointed out. The little light of hope seems very fragile at this time, when even the sweetness of Monet's *Water Lilies*, inaugurated in May 1927, six months after the death of the painter, is despised, if not seen in a martial perspective until the war of 1939. The *Water Lilies* were indeed an island of peace, with a clear and soft palette that no work of the avant-gardes of the time did not deign to even try. In the 1930s, painted were made in brown, black, dark red, in the chthonian or nocturnal colors of the new geopolitical order of the avant-gardes. *Les avant-gardes artistiques 1918-1945 , une histoire transnationale (The artistic avant-garde 1918-1945, a transnational history)*. Béatrice Joyeux –Prunel pp 570

1954: the American critic, Clément Greenberg, theorist of the New York abstract school, visits the Orangerie. In a famous essay " *American Type Painting* ", published the following year, this pope of Formalism draws parallels between Monet and American artists such as Clyfford Still or Barnett Newman, arguably the first to reassess the impressionist contribution.

1955: a panel of *Water Lilies* is purchased by the patron of the Museum of Modern Art in New York, Alfred H. Barr, an otherwise staunch defender of Cézanne and Cubism as sources of abstraction. Two painters of this movement in particular fit in the lineage of Monet, namely Morris Louis and Helen Frankenthaler. Frankenthaler, at one time the companion of Greenberg, invents the technique of color as a stain (stained color), which the American critic will theorize under the concept of color field painting.



## CHINESE TIME

"Integrating Time into Spatial Representation has always been a more or less conscious concern of classical Chinese artists, in that the aim of their practice was not so much to fix a privileged site (or scene) as to create a organic microcosm that corresponds to the macrocosm of Tao, and in which it was important for them to imitate more than the created world, but the very gesture of Creation. At the basis of their practice lied an organicist conception of the universe in which vital breaths were supposed to connect all beings and their actions in a *chou-liu* (universal circulation) involving incessant internal transformations, like a kind of continuous cosmogenesis in which Time is no more than Space in mutation, and Space is Time temporarily resting.

To realize the representation of this dynamic Space-Time, the painters resorted to various processes of which the two main ones are:

-Inclusion of a poem or text in the painting. The calligraphic signs that inhabit the empty space of the painting, while combining plastically with the painted elements, introduce, through their linear nature relating a lived or dreamed experience, a properly temporal dimension.

-Long horizontal scroll representing a landscape across "ten thousand li". As the scroll is unrolled, the painted landscape, interspersed with median voids, reveals itself both as expanded Space and as Time, living and reversible to the tame rhythm .. "

François Cheng

### Hsüan-ho Hua-p'u

Essay on painting of the Hsüan -ho era, written on the orders of Emperor Hui-tsung (reign 1100-1125), of the Sung. This text is taken from the introduction to the section on "Flowers and Birds".

... The Book of Odes\* contains a large number of valuable names, and the Calendars expressly indicate the moments when the flowers hatch and fade, where the birds sing and keep quiet.

\* first poetic collection of Chinese literature, dating from the first millennium BC.

camellia / Northern finch  
snowdrop / Song thrush  
narcissus / woodpecker  
campanula / oriole  
peony / owl  
poppy / gray heron  
lavender / shrike  
gladiolus / common buzzard  
aster / swallow  
heather / starling  
chrysanthemum / robin  
mimosa / tit

camelia appelvink  
Sneeuwkllokje lijster  
narcis specht  
grasklokje wielewaal  
pioen uil  
papaver grijze reiger  
lavendel / klauwier  
gladiool buizerd  
aster zwaluw  
heide spreekw  
chryasant roodborstje  
mimosa mees

## THE FIRST DAY

### 1. A construction site in a construction site

An artist's construction site in the construction site of the House of Culture of Namur, October 22, 2017.

On a 10 m-long roll of paper placed on the floor, armed with two theater brushes, I drew the 12 figures for 60 minutes, accompanied by Laetitia Yalon who announced the title of each figure. This title included the name of a flower followed by the name of a bird. The title of this performance was **99 minutes chrono**, but it was so cold and windy that it actually was a lot shorter. I decided, however, to keep the title.

### 2 The first day and the second time

For 60minutes, I drew with brushes, in black and with two hands, the 12 same figures on a roll of white paper of 10 m x 1 m. While I was drawing, I recited "The First Day," a poem from Edward Glissant's collection of poems "The Black Salt" . It was on the occasion of the General Assembly of the Sofam.

### 3. On 14 October 2018, Gallery Annie Gentils Antwerp

The title **Premier Jour** (The First day) of E. Glissant is kept. I will draw the same ideograms but I will be accompanied on the flute by Kurt du Tre.