

Intimations of a commentary on the multi-animated art of C.F. Reuterswärd

"Photography is not art," said Man Ray. What these "images plexiques" present us with here today is, properly speaking, not painting, since during the course of its explorations the hand meets not with matter which is stubborn or difficult to work, but with ink immaculately flowing, on cellophane sheets immaculately smooth; nor photography, since this optical diversion houses no intrusive exposure to light - nor indeed is it cinema, since Reuterswärd scorns to employ any lens or means of projection. Nevertheless, this new and most unusual form of art does contain the occasional nod in the direction of discipline (I use this term deliberately, since this is an art which is resolutely anti-authority and unfettered by all traces of discipline, very definitely that of our friend Carl Fredrik Reuterswärd, the poet and painter living in Stockholm).

From the painting, or rather, its most developed expression, the operator retains an impulsive automatism which displays a fleeting affinity with the investigations of a K.O. Götz or a Sönderborg; it has been seduced by the unashamedly diaphanous aspect of photographic film, where opacity and transparency may confront each other without subterfuge; as for cinema, which concerns above all movement, he has achieved the impossible, that of FIXING its very essence, its manic pirouettes and turns reflecting the tiniest caprices of a slender blade of metal as it reels and spins on surges of wet ink.

In this movement - used more than ever by Reuterswärd to displace line - the experimenter knows perfectly how to suggest every change of gear: there is definitely a hint of the "march of the machines" in these compositions - but here some strange machines or a shower of sand à la Duchamp interrupt the systems' abstract purr at exactly at the right moment. When considering other images, one might also recall at leisure (and quite fruitlessly) the molecular vibration, the Brownian movement or any other shower of sparks of this micro photography which causes so many current painters to nod, even driving them to produce literal copies of these inviolable landscapes. But what is before us here does not derive from a concern so abstemiously aesthetic: to this so delicious cuisine in which so many delight, CFR prefers lavish use of a certain spice of the name poetic humour.

A MIND in natural harmony with the furthest shock waves of "the modern mind", that is what enables the author of these "images plexiques" to find once again, by way of those great pioneers of abstract film Richter and Eggeling, the climate of total receptiveness which characterises in equal measure the highest peaks of surrealist, abstract-lyrical painting and the first cartoons of Emile Cohn in which the linear ingenuity of the images made it possible for the absurd to flower right at the heart of the irrefutable.

Edouard Jaguer, September 1957