

YASS, 30 APRIL '88

Dear Edouard and Simone,

How are you? I hope you are both full of health and long life. I thank you kindly for your letter & several parcels, including the catalogue for the exhibition in Le Havre. I will talk more of this later, but first I would like to relate a dream that I had just before waking this morning.

The dream begins with Rita, my companion, and I looking through a copy of "WOMEN'S WEEKLY", a local magazine. We happen onto an article about Perahim, referring to the jungle he has in his backyard. There are some photos showing a profusion of trees and a few animals. Rita & I find the inclusion of this article totally out of character with the usual content of this magazine. And now Edouard & Simone appear in the dream. The visit is unheralded and unexpected, although it does not seem that Rita and I are surprised. I comment on the coincidence of your visit in the light of the Perahim article. I look through the magazine to find the article again, but cannot, which frustrates me. I say that I like Perahim, especially when the paintings are reproduced in colour. Edouard asks which one I like the best. I say the one reproduced in PHASES 5 2^e Serie entitled "Oiseaux possibles." Edouard says that sometimes these prints do not work. Edouard & I are now lying half on the road, half on the side of the road. A car drives past, the driver angry that he has to avoid my legs which reach out into the road. Edouard is showing me the layout of a new catalogue. The pictures look like mediæval religious works. Edouard explains how the registration is not good. It seems there are two parts to the printing process. The first part, the bottom layer, is done in France, and the second part, or top layer, is done in Italy, and the two layers do not align, which produces a hazy effect. The colours are not true. Edouard is angry at this, and says that they should be done again.

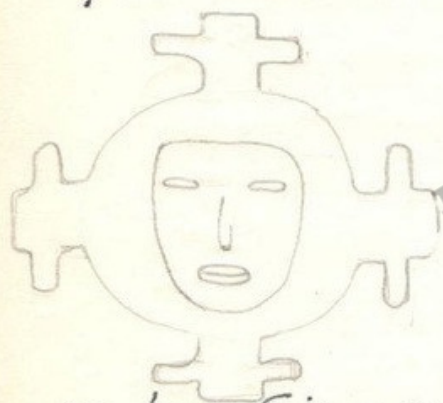
All four of us are together again. Rita and I both comment on how young you both look. [In fact, you look as you do in the photo at the beginning of the catalogue, Edouard, in 1952, although your hair is

reddish in colour and you have a green jacket] We are walking along the main street of Yass, Simone & Rita in front, Edouard & I behind. The street is not in Yass, however, but looks more like a street in Paris from a photo by Atget. All the buildings look newly renovated with a lot of wrought-iron work and are the same colour green (deep & dark) as our house. As we are walking, we come across an antique store with all its wares displayed in a courtyard in front of the shop. All the buildings in this area are set back off the road. I marvel at a chair made out of dark wood, which seems to have a pillar of knotted teeth (carved out of the same wood) growing out of the seat, making it impossible to sit on. I point the chair out to Edouard, commenting on how Sadean it is, and yet the chair is different. The base of the chair is the same, but the central pillar, which was only 1 metre in height, is now 3 metres tall and intricately carved, topped by a cross with a large disk around a face. We want to show Simone & Rita but they have walked off.

We cannot see them. We continue to walk up the road in the direction we think they have gone. I tell Edouard that it is great that they have visited, and how so many people have already visited, including Mary Lou and Eugenio Gracell (who, in fact, has never visited). We come across an old run-down shop and

we know Simone & Rita are inside. It is a bookbinder's workshop. The bookbinder is serving a customer, although he seems to be only slashing the spines of the books. The customer seems concerned whether the artisan can fix the books. The bookbinder says that it all depends on how bad they are. Edouard & I are now sitting on top of a large bookcase with glass doors.

I wonder aloud why Edouard & Simone have made the visit. Edouard explains that it wasn't simply a visit. It was part of a pilgrimage in time through the aniverse [this word "aniverse" is very unclear in the dream]. While you are doing this pilgrimage, you stay the same age, although it seems you can only do this for a short time. I am confused but the bookbinder understands the concept perfectly, as if he were adept at it. It half explains why Edouard & Simone are so young, although they seem



to be younger rather than the same age, at least the same age as when I met them in 1976.

Edouard + I are now walking around the workshop, which is full of trinkets and jewellery. Edouard is handling them. Simone + Rita emerge from a corridor towards the back of the shop, Simone coming out of a side room, like a change room (and she has changed from the beginning of the dream). Simone now has short cropped black hair and she is wearing an ornate necklace. Edouard is holding a spoon which has an ornamental handle. The top of the handle is made out of a milky green glass with a silver model of the Sydney Harbour Bridge coming out of it, as if the bridge was dipping its foot in a lake. I think it looks silly, but both Edouard + Simone seem to "recognise" it, as if it is linked with their "sojourn through the universe". The atmosphere in the workshop is like that of some secret ritual being performed. Edouard places the top of the spoon in his mouth and sucks it. When he pulls the spoon from his mouth, the green glass is no longer milky



... I awake et l'expérience continue. All experiences continue as they reverberate through my mental mud. I thank you 1,645 times for The catalogue from the exhibition in Lettave. I am sad that I could not have been there to see it in the flesh, but I thank you for including me in the exhibition so that I at least could breathe the sea breeze. With the salty air in my lungs, I set sail in my ship of bones. The hour is always midnight. The clouds are always crystal.

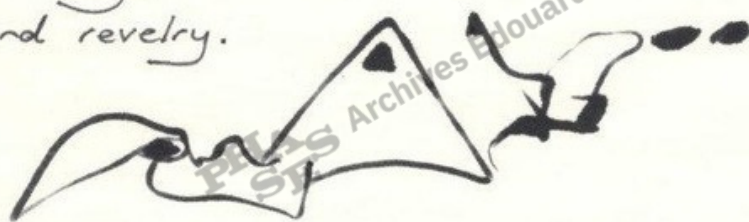


I thank you also for all the "notices" for exhibitions over the last few years. Rita's favourite was the Marcel Jean. I must admit that my favourite is the small card for the exhibition of Anne Ethvin at "Le Scribe". It sits atop my bookcase so I can view it everyday.

It reminds me of a lush quilt which becomes a city or an auditorium open onto the scar of the night. The orchestra is lost in the soup. A metallic sound can be heard coming from the tower which has appeared at the foot of the bed. We eat these phantoms and become invisible. We descend the stairs but the psychopathic socialites are unaware of our presence except for the smell of fish and uneaten vegetables.



Is Stephen Gilbert ever alone ... can he avoid the gnashing of teeth and the seductive lips that lick his feet? The garden is omnivorous and eats you from the inside. Philip West magnifies our disquiet. The internal world, wrapped in primordial clay, invades & excavates our senses via a reality of ritual and revelry.



I was interested in reading the protest, "UN ASTICOT DANS LE VACHERIN," against the inclusion of the Nazi Marc Eemans in the exhibition which you & José Pierre helped to organise. If anything, it just highlights the dangers, even naïveté, of organising anything of a surrealist nature, within the open arms of State-run organisations or academic institutions. Even the insistence of Pierre on a "contrat écrit fixant responsabilités reciproques" would not have insured an essential purity.

Was your protest successful in excluding Eemans from the exhibition in Denmark?

Do you have any "review" copies of the catalogue?



L'experience continue out of the fire into the flame. On the merit of the announcement of A.C.T.U.A.L by Schuster + Goutier which appeared in GRID 3/4, and spurred on by the lugubrious question, "WHAT IS LEFT OF ANDRÉ BRETON?" I wrote the article, "ACTUALLY," which El Janabi published in GRID 5. What this article does is place me alongside those whom Schuster holds in contempt. "Quant à ceux pour qui l'existence d'ACTUAL est suspecte, je m'en tape et je les emmerde." Have you read my article? If you haven't, I hope you can, for I would like to know your "position" on ACTUAL and its relationship to PHASES.

We have much to discuss but a tropical light oozes from my eyes, so I will end this letter at the foot of a glacier and I look forward to hearing from you again.

My warmest greetings to both of you
from Rita +
Michael