

PRESS RELEASE YACINE EXHIBITIONS

The Villager - New York, mars 1993

Painter looks to pre-history for very modern works

By Robert Hicks

Algerian painter Yacine Hachani likens himself to prehistoric man, who in his wall paintings, hieroglyphics and calligraphy gave the first graphic expression of man's need to represent his thoughts. It's a process which both allows Hachani to return to fundamental issues of rhythm, space and lines in his abstract art and to evolve as an artist.

"I do not want to transform prehistoric art that deals with daily life into a modern abstract art. I'm looking for a direction for myself in my abstract art," says Hachani of his current series of 50 paintings, 16 of which are now exhibited at Z Gallery through March 18.

"For me, the fundamental principles of abstract art communicate a deeply emotive, almost ritualistic and mythological experience," he continues. "It can express an evolving image. Anything abstract is a rupture of daily life. It breaks people away from their daily experiences. It separates them from others. Like prehistoric man, I seek guidance to express myself. We do this because we need some kind of direction to evolve as artists."

Hachani started the series in 1993 to continue a previous interest in prehistoric art, which began as a research paper at the Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts d'Alger, but decided to depart from his former use of color.

"I decided to use only ochre and black. Ochre reminds me of the earth, to which each individual connects. Black is my primary drawing



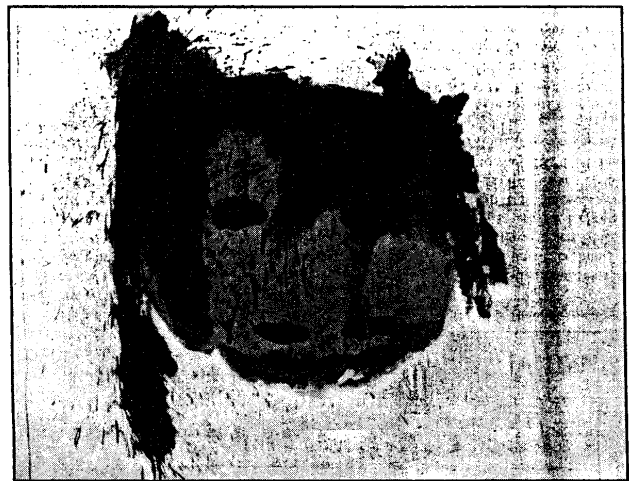
color," says Hachani. "I feel colors give impressions: I want to deal with 'results' now. By that I mean, I want to create a solid, strong painting which doesn't depend on color."

Born on Nov. 10, 1961 in Algiers, Hachani began to paint nature scenes in his composition books at age 7 as a diversion from his boredom. Encouraged by his mother and inspired by his father, a poet, Hachani enrolled in the Societe des Beaux-Arts d'Alger at age 8.

Introduced to music and plastic arts, Hachani continued his studies at the Ecole Nationale from 1981-85. Not until age 26 did he first exhibit his work. Already he was fascinated with abstract art.

As his first assignment at Ecole Nationale, Hachani was asked to write a paper on art history, for which he received the highest award - his only notable distinction while a student. He wanted to start with the basics and the wall paintings he'd seen in Hoggar and Tacile, Algeria whetted his interest in prehistoric drawings. During his research, he decided to investigate whether prehistoric man had a notion of abstract art.

"That period is so basic and fundamental that it transcends borders, nationalities, cultures, politics, all kinds of divisions. Prehistoric art transcends barriers," says Hachani.



Untitled, by Yacine Hachani, 60 x 60 Ins.

Hachani found that prehistoric man had a very different notion of abstract art from what modern man in Western art thinks.

"The whole notion of abstract art in the Western world under modernist tenets is a completely new concept," he says. "Western art, of course, goes back to the Greeks, who held up imitation of nature, or mimesis, as the highest goal or standard for art. So abstract art in a modernist concept is very rational, very conceptual. It's not something that just happened. It developed over a period of time. What I was interested in was how prehistoric man came up with his notions of abstract art."

Hachani believes in general there's not much difference between prehistoric man and his modern equivalent, but they had to initiate

things in a different manner. They had to create fire to cook and build a wheel to transport goods and themselves he says.

By investigating these matters, Hachani feels we can enter into a philosophic and rational process which allows us to grow. In his art, he's trying to get back to the fundamental issues which confronted prehistoric man.

"Thinking and reflection is inexhaustible. It can always continue. It never stops. It's an ongoing process," he says. "I don't want to place prehistoric art in a modern context. What interests me is to show the fundamental issues and characteristics of mankind in abstract art."

Paintings by Yacine Hachani, at Z Gallery,
70 Greene St.; until March 10, Tues.-Sat. 11
A.M.-7 P.M. 966-8836.

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Abstraction

Yacine Hachani is a painter, age twenty seven, and his destiny seems quite simple - linear - as if sketched in advance. When he was a child, he used to spend his time drawing, often on the pages of his school books. When he was eight, his mother, who noticed his gift, sent him to the Société des Beaux-Arts d'Algiers, his native town.

There he was initiated to music and plastic arts. Subsequently, he joins the Ecole Nationale des Beaux-Arts then the Ecole Supérieure des Beaux-Arts. His father is a poet, author of a "Lettre au paradis".

So his parents find it natural that their son engages in the narrow lane of art. Assured, Yacine pursues his career, exposing his paintings first in Algeria before crossing the Mediterranean last year to begin working in Paris.

Yacine Hachani is not surprised by his success. "When you work, it's quite normal that things go well!" he says. And he works a lot. However, he does not like to speak about his work. "My paintings should speak for me he explains. The only indication he agrees to give about his large abstract paintings concerns his technique which he intends to be extremely rudimentary. "I use only the three basic colors, red, yellow and blue, never any secondary one". This plainness in the execution Hachani insists upon is based according to him on the argument that caveman painted abstract before he evolved to figurativeness. "In fact, I would like to take the other way round" he says abruptly as if suddenly aware that he is saying too much. Yacine Hachani is not wrong when he places his art under the auspices of such an archaic fathering because in his very colorful and dynamic paintings, one can notice, appearing constantly, a certain number of signs strangely similar to those painting on the rocks by the ancient tribes and which gave birth later to an alphabet fallen into disuse long ago.

Philippe Gardenal

•Galerie Quimcampois

ALMANACH

Tous les mercredis
l'actualité arabe à Paris

Abstraction

Yacine Hachani est peintre, il a vingt-sept ans et son destin paraît fort simple (rectiligne), comme tracé d'avance. Quand il est un tout petit garçon, il passe son temps à dessiner, souvent sur les pages de ses livres d'école. Sa mère remarque ce don et décide de l'inscrire, dès l'âge de huit ans, à la Société des beaux-arts d'Algiers, sa ville natale.

Là, on l'initie à la musique et aux arts plastiques. Fort logiquement, il s'inscrit ensuite aux cours de l'Ecole nationale des beaux-arts puis à ceux de l'Ecole supérieure des beaux-arts. Son père est poète, auteur d'une *Lettre au paradis* dédiée à son fils Boubakeur, tombé au champ d'honneur lors de l'éphémère guerre algéro-marocaine.

Ses parents trouvent donc tout naturel que leur fils s'engage sur le chemin étroit de l'art. Et Yacine poursuit sûrement sa carrière, exposant ses toiles d'abord en Algérie, avant que de traverser, l'année dernière, la Méditerranée pour se mettre à peindre à Paris où son travail est aujourd'hui accueilli.

Yacine Hachani ne s'étonne pas de réussir dans la voie difficile qu'il a choisie: « Quand on travaille, dit-il, il est normal que ça marche. » Et il travaille beaucoup. En revanche, il n'aime guère parler de ce qu'il fait: « Ce sont mes toiles qui doivent parler pour moi », explique-t-il. La seule indication qu'il consente à donner devant ses grandes toiles abstraites concerne sa technique, qu'à dessein il veut extrêmement rudimentaire: « Je n'utilise que les trois couleurs de base, le rouge, le jaune et le bleu, jamais aucune couleur secondaire. » Cette simplicité dans l'exécution sur laquelle il se complait à insister, Hachani la fonde sur un raisonnement qui consiste à prétendre que l'homme des cavernes a commencé par l'abstraction avant de venir à la figuration: « Au fond, c'est un peu le chemin inverse que je voudrais faire », assure-t-il brusquement, et comme fâché d'en avoir trop dit. Yacine Hachani n'a pas tort de placer sa peinture sous les auspices de cette archaïque parrainage, car dans ses toiles très colorées et très mouvementées apparaît avec constance un certain nombre de signes qui ressemblent étrangement à ceux que les antiques tribus berbères gravaient sur le roc et qui donna plus tard naissance à un alphabet, depuis longtemps tombé en désuétude. Sans doute retrouve-t-il ainsi des racines enfouies profondément car sa famille, bien qu'installée depuis longtemps à Alger, descend d'une tribu chaoui, ce peuple berbère qui vit dans les Aurès.

PHILIPPE GARDENAL
•Galerie Quimcampois, 1678 rue Quincaup, Paris IV. De 11 heures à 14 heures. Tél. 46 04 32 62.

ENFANTS

I.M.A.-JEANS. L'Institut du monde arabe ouvre ses portes aux enfants tous les jours pendant les vacances scolaires. Pour les individuels, « le monde arabe en images », à partir de photos, après laquelle les enfants reconstituent une carte illustrée du monde arabe (7-12 ans). Pour les groupes scolaires, deux parcours-explorations: « expansion de l'Islam et son rôle dans la diffusion de la langue arabe » (pour les plus grands, évidemment!), et « le décor et l'objet dans la vie quotidienne du VII^e au XIX^e siècle », activités manuelles à l'appui.

•Institut du monde arabe, 21, quai Saint-Bernard, Paris V^e. Prix: 5F. Tél. 46 51 38 52.

LA SUEDE A PARIS. Expo des dessins et aquarelles originaux de Ilon Wikland, Estonienne arrivée en Suède en 1944. Depuis 1954, elle illustre les livres de la plus célèbre des écrivains suédois pour enfants, Astrid Lindgren (*Mio mon Mio*, et autres personnages pittoresques).



Ilon Wikland

•Centre culturel suédois, 11, rue Payenne, Paris III^e. Tél. 42 71 62 30. Du lundi au vendredi de 13h à 18h, samedi et dimanche de 14h à 18h, jusqu'au 9 mars.

QUI MOME ME SUIVE.

Papa et maman partis, cinq garmements se retrouvent entre eux pour fêter l'anniversaire de JeanMi. Mais P'ut N'eff fait peur à tout le monde avec ses histoires de poux, Philcro fait le rocker, JeanJean joue à Superman et Petit René en redemande. Un spectacle musical de la Compagnie Bouskidou, « pas gnan-gnan », promet le dossier de presse, dans le cadre du Festival « SFP Jeunesse ».

•Théâtre de l'Empire, dimanches 19 et 26 février à 15h 45, avenue de Wagram, Paris VIII^e. Tél. 47 46 01 61. Billets: 35 F, adultes 20 F. Pour les 6-12 ans.

ROCKENVILLE.

Le concert que Bruno donne aux enfants est perturbé par l'arrivée de drôles de zigotos. Bruno prête main forte à l'inspecteur Columbus. C'est *Etrange affaire à Rockenville*, un spectacle de la Boite à rythme, pour les 5-12 ans.

•Théâtre des Sources, du 22 au 24 février, à 14h30. Enfants 21F, adultes 32F. •Jeux 14 et 3 Docteur (aquarelle) avenue de Paris 92060 Fontenay-aux-Roses. Tél. 46 60 25 72.

RAPPELS VACANCES.

Les Sœurs Bôchamel jouent encore leur *Perte du corsaire* aujourd'hui et demain au Tintamarre. Quant aux *Contes de la rue Broca* de Pierre Gripari par le Roseau Théâtre, c'est samedi à 16h.

•Tintamarre, 144 10 rue des Luminards Paris IV^e. Tél. 46 27 11 62.
•Roseau Théâtre, 12 rue de Richard Paris IX^e. Réservations: 42 71 60 20.

L I B E R A T I O N

MERCREDI 22 FEVRIER 1989 35

libération february 1989
Paris

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Rencontre avec Yacine HACHANI

Il exposait, il y a peu, à la Galerie Quincampoix, dans ce quartier qui semble enfin connaître un décollage artistique malgré l'ombre portée et les tonitruances de "la machine" Beaubourg. J'avais été tardivement alerté par ces grandes abstractions aux coloriations vifs, aux espaces beaucoup trop rythmés, aux traits beaucoup trop volontaires pour n'être que des géométries et des impulsions imbriquées.

Hélas on était à l'heure du décrochage d'une présentation qui ne semblait pas s'être déroulée sous les meilleurs auspices. J'avais envie d'en voir et savoir plus. Rendez-vous fut pris dans l'atelier de l'artiste, rue Raymond Losserand. Un éclat de rire avait crépité dans l'écouteur quand je m'étais informé de l'existence d'un code ou d'un interphone. Comme si je ne pouvais pas imaginer autrement le havre d'un jeune artiste (27 ans) débarqué il y a un an de son Algérie natale, sans connaissances ni ressources spéciales, sauf la pugnacité de son caractère, la certitude de la réussite à portée de ses mains et ses meilleures toiles sous le bras en démonstration d'un talent prolifère et déjà maîtrisé !

Un studio-atelier-entrepôt-musée comme si "la vie de bohème" existait encore dans le coeur un peu délabré de ce XIVème arrondissement où les squatts et les promoteurs, deux espèces redoutables de prédateurs, ont conjugué leurs excès de zèle.

La comparaison s'arrête à l'ébauche. Yacine et Dalila n'ont rien de Rodolphe et Mimi. Ils sont bien

loin des rêveries fumeuses et des passions en souffrance. Et la peinture est là, omniprésente, éclatante d'énergie, reflet d'un travail acharné, d'une quête permanente et d'une inébranlable confiance en l'avenir.

"Là où je suis, je suis chez moi". On s'installe pareillement dans la conversation, sans détour, avec cette éloquence (très algéroise !) faite de véhémence, un rien intransigeante et orgueilleuse, si une pointe d'humour ne s'insinuait tout à coup comme pour dégonfler une dialectique soudain encombrante. On laisse alors à la plaisanterie son plein effet de détente et on reprend sérieusement.

Yacine Hachani a suivi un cursus très classique pour un enfant que ses parents, plus que lui, encore dans l'insouciance et l'indécision adolescentes, avaient envie de voir cultiver des dons en dessin. Il mène donc, en parallèle, des études au lycée Pasteur et des cours à la Société des Beaux-Arts. Il passe un bac artistique et entre à l'Ecole Nationale des Beaux-Arts d'Alger.

Sa première exposition à la Galerie Mohamed Racim aura, comme on dit, un succès d'estime dans le cercle assez restreint du monde de l'art. La presse lui fait un accueil élogieux et un peu guindé. Sans doute encouragé mais insatisfait, avec cette spontanéité dans la décision, cet instinct fonceur pour bousculer les obstacles - il dit les blocages, les préjugés - qui semblent le caractériser, il ne tarde pas à plier bagages.

Le voilà de l'autre côté de la Méditerranée, allégé de contraintes mais lourd d'espoirs et surtout par-

faitement "libre dans sa tête" qu'il appelle "la tour de contrôle" montrant comme une profession de foi, un des tous premiers et rares dessins figuratifs (auto-portrait ?), visage quasi lobotomisé sous un éclairage à la Rembrandt.

Car ce pratiquant convaincu de l'art abstrait disserte avec une lucidité exceptionnelle de sa technique et de ses motivations, appelant à la rescousse aussi bien les graphistes des cavernes (ses ancêtres du Tassili) que Nietzsche, ne craignant pas le paradoxe "en reculant le théorème de l'abstraction", d'atteindre non seulement au symbolisme, mais au réalisme.

Il ne s'agit pas d'une provocation rhétorique car la fascination qu'exercent ses toiles vient aussi de là, de ce signifiant stylisé, épuré. "Les gens ont peur d'exprimer ce qu'ils sentent profondément, des choses très simples et très fortes. Ils ont assimilé trop de concepts, de règles, de valeurs. Les enfants n'ont pas ces académismes. Les primitifs non plus."

Ainsi certaines grandes toiles ne sont pas que des dispositifs esthétiques, des chaos colorés et mouvementés ; elles se veulent une expression violente pour dénoncer les choses et les changer ou une réflexion plus apaisée pour exprimer "le sel de la terre et le grain de la vie".

Les "spécialistes" seraient bien avisés de porter d'urgence un regard sur cette oeuvre toute de tensions et d'attentions. Elle nous semble, dans l'accomplissement et la promesse, une des plus authentiques qui soient.

André Videau

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HOMMES ET MIGRATIONS, Paris Mai 1989

The three creative moment

El watan, Algiers
1983

Yacine Hachani, the young painter, exposed at the Mohamed Racim art gallery, from the 16th to the 25th of May, a serie of paintings characterised by the whole problematic issue of pictorial expression.

Having been a student at the Ecole Nationale des Beaux-Arts of Algiers, Yacine Hachani felt the passion of artistic creation developing in him. So he set to work without neglecting any formality in order to grasp the pictorial relief.

Because it is through the daily work that the cultural end product of an artist in quest for the deep configuration of his conscience rythm is elaborated. here, the painter unveils part of his inner self, of his perpetually changed mood which are regularly expressed in pieces of work so different by form, that is, by their significant envelope. The artist's line is an attempt at exteriorizing a strongly interiorized feeling elucidated by this determination to fix his spiritual passion in the pictorial act, by this so vehement discourse characterised by the use of vivacious, if not garish colors. Here the bloody red and the turquoise blue seem dethroning other used colors. But this choice of colors expresses the will to seize the motion of the whole work. This is the reason why we were able to distinguish three moments in the artist's work. Hachani Yacine sets in relief three periods in his artistic evolution. He conveys them in such a way that the global work seems at first sight – we would say at first reading – as a juxtaposition of unrelated models. Nevertheless, when our eye falls on those oil paintings to grasp some internal mechanism, to justify our point of view or rather our critical reading of pieces, we realize that they form a harmoniously arranged whole. perhaps is it due to this succession evocative of the passage of time which includes that particular inverse, depiction of a meaningful space. These three moments can be read through the three proceeding ways of the artist. A metaphysic painting,

transcendentally inspired, an attempt to depict the upper part of the human body, the mind which elevates the "being" towards a self-understanding in a particularly altruistic movement. The piece entitled "L'âme" (The soul) is by itself significant of the artist's condition to seize the slightest manifestations of his own conscience. In fact, what leads the visitor's eye is this absolute fierceness to escape from darkness which is synonymous of a lack of warmth, to get rid the invading presence of solitude, the veiled word and the motionless gesture. In this first movement, the artist avoids using bright colors. It is rather blackish grey dominant. This "figure on a threshold" is an evidence of the restless quest for light. It is in order to tear off the veil and reach the light which shapes a rectangle at the door that the painter strives to present us with such a landscape or a setting. The author insists upon the transcendental side of this first movement, meaning that this notion of self-surpassing must be elucidated from the angle of a search for a friendship to experience, a brotherly link to consolidate, an affective relationship to maintain and perpetuate. This pictorial enunciation technique leads the visitor towards an adherence of his own feeling of appreciation to the so much present piece of work. We feel the communicative strength that emanates from the paintings and adjoins a presence to us. And this evocation of the "being" is close to this constant concern of the fertilizing imaginary of the artist's conscience. This piece of work seems to summarize the whole existentialist issue of Yacine Hachani. This is the reason why he is able to go beyond his inner conflict in order to present us with a world where temporalness is synonymous of overflowing

affectivity, where the eye of the visitor is reflected on the painting as if he wanted to seize his own expression, that is, to see himself according to the moment when he admires the work. However, the paintings cannot acquire all of their deep significance if we do not mention this second perspective of the pictorial movement : the abstract painting. The artist discovers the plurality of meaning in the abstract work. It is through this interweaving of lines, curves, mixed colors, those interactions between materialized square and serrated figures that we are able to read the author's artistic text. The quest for moral values and their fixation on the painted piece remain the major preoccupation of the artist. The square figure symbol is illustrative of a tendency towards world perfection – a world from which horror and injustice are banished – whereas the pyramidal and serrated lines denote this effort to grasp the moral values, to apprehend them and make of them a rule of conduct, a social model of behaviour. The artist does not venture at all in the inextricable philosophical developments, he but expresses a feeling clearly enunciated in the painting. Hachani's work is decipherable like a surrealist poem, that is, by discovering the deep meaning of a writing that does not seem to provide any lexical rule nor any arrangement criteria. Nevertheless, the order of significance is quite apparent and brings out the author's aptitude to show us his technique, his will of self expression. The pieces entitled "La Tempête" (The Tempest) and "Trois Personnages" (Three Personages) are great moments of the presentation. They show the artist's mastery of the pertinent trait, the defined measure and the explosion of the emotional charge driving

him. it is then the quest for affective balance that he convey through his work. It is also the demonstration of his own conviction of having reached a spiritual plenitude thanks to this transcendental possibility, this self-surpassing, thus being able to throw into relief a reading which is finally adopted by the visitor. This complementariness between the artistic text and the visitor. This complementariness between the artistic text and the visitor's point of view indicates a perfect adequacy of work, like the image of our own conscience on these so expansive paintings.

Now we are reaching the third movement. This presentation of contemporary art is brilliantly achieved with "La Venus de Milo". a new way of reproducing this statue which has exercised a certain influence on the author. The lines and curves used show a harmony that elevates the patience and the spontaneity of the artist to a moment of true aesthetic gratification. Because Yacine Hachani is searching for this spontaneity to master, this instant to seize, this mood to express. All his work is a quest for the possible instant when two worlds unite : the experience temporalness and the exteriorization of his point of view. This is why the triangular dimension of Hachani's exposition expresses the need to convey a mood, the will to master the geometrical forms of the abstract space and, finally, the determination to reach a certain perfection concerning the moral conduct of the individual. We share with him this proceeding way which consists of making us discover a part of ourselves buried inside the work.

And the space of colors became the artist's melody, thus allied to the glance of the visitor who discovers a shape of his own imagination.

FUTURE EXPECTATIONS

The preview of young Yacine Hachani's exposition took place late Saturday in the Racim art gallery. A profusion of paintings quite "recherché" in the abstract tendency unveils a turbulent temper. The artist, with much inspiration and using different techniques of modern art, gives free expression to spontaneity and graphic inspirations revealing harmonious colors and a strong and dynamic plasticity. Hachani's exposition is a first sketch of a career to come. It expresses initial hopes for the future and is an evidently successful departure towards the world of plastic arts.

M. B

Espérances futures

Le vernissage de l'exposition du jeune Yacine Hachani, a eu lieu samedi dernier à la Galerie « Racim ». Une profusion de peintures assez recherchées dans la tendance abstraite, dévoilent un tempérament mouvementé. L'artiste qui s'avère très inspiré et se prévalant de différentes techniques de l'art moderne, laisse libre cours à la spontanéité et à des inspirations graphiques, harmonieusement colorées et à la plasticité solide et dynamique. Yacine Hachani formule, par cette exposition, un premier jet, de premières espérances sur le futur et de toute évidence un excellent départ vers le monde des arts plastiques.

M. B.

