

FROM MAGRITTE, THE INVISIBLE VISIBLE

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Without surrendering to evidence which even if conclusive would convict us of our own bad faith, we must entertain the possibility of our imprisonment in discourse. Although depressing to consider, it is certainly not unimaginable that the formal structure of articulation, this concrete universal of hard-won intersubjectivity, has become as reified an incarnation of surplus value as the invisible hand ever prestidigitated from the grimmest Manchester gloom. Who has not seen midnight lurking in the high noon of reason and felt a chilling consonance of consciousness with Foucault's drastic vision of the great ephemera — *Sapientia*?

It is not from fear or resignation, but from the experience and umbilication of our Being-in-the-world that ears and eyes open to new songs of relatedness. We do not hear George Crumb and Murray Schafer, we do not see Escher and Magritte. We experience a consciousness of meaning again being in motion. Under the broad spacious imperial vista of disciplinary common prayer we feel the oath — the vulgar motion of primary filiations. They compel, they confuse, they bore and tickle; and with all the zoo has been resavaged. We feel with Mohr that it is good.

Harmony can be heard or it can be analyzed. Sometimes it can actually be an event. The following contribution is resonant with the wave motion of contemporary experience. It is therapist and shaman; artist and scholar; poet and preacher. The journal hopes the reader can surrender some of our stern insularities of practical reason for its duration. Reading Mohr requires the will to forget Mohr. Moving with Mohr signifies the dissolution of the fixed self. Mohr writes for pure reflection in good faith. He would let us lose his object to find our own. He would let us flee anguish in order to discover our own.

In Mohr we encounter concrete universals from our intersubjective world re-represented as entities in their own right. Indeed, it is well we should meet for we have been dispossessed of them. Mohr joins experience to the transcendental reconstitution of creative historical consciousness and explodes traditional discourse. Form dissolves back into the for-itself from which it was fashioned. Its implosion in bi-lingual puns and etymological asides reconstitutes its dignity as lived rather than lived in.

In a parallel manner, the Canadian composer Murray Schafer advocates the desirability of "ear-cleaning" in order to rid the tyrannized intelligence of its own self-imposed dissonances. With great respects to Schafer, we propose one sense can best be cleaned by another. We would ask the eye to cleanse the

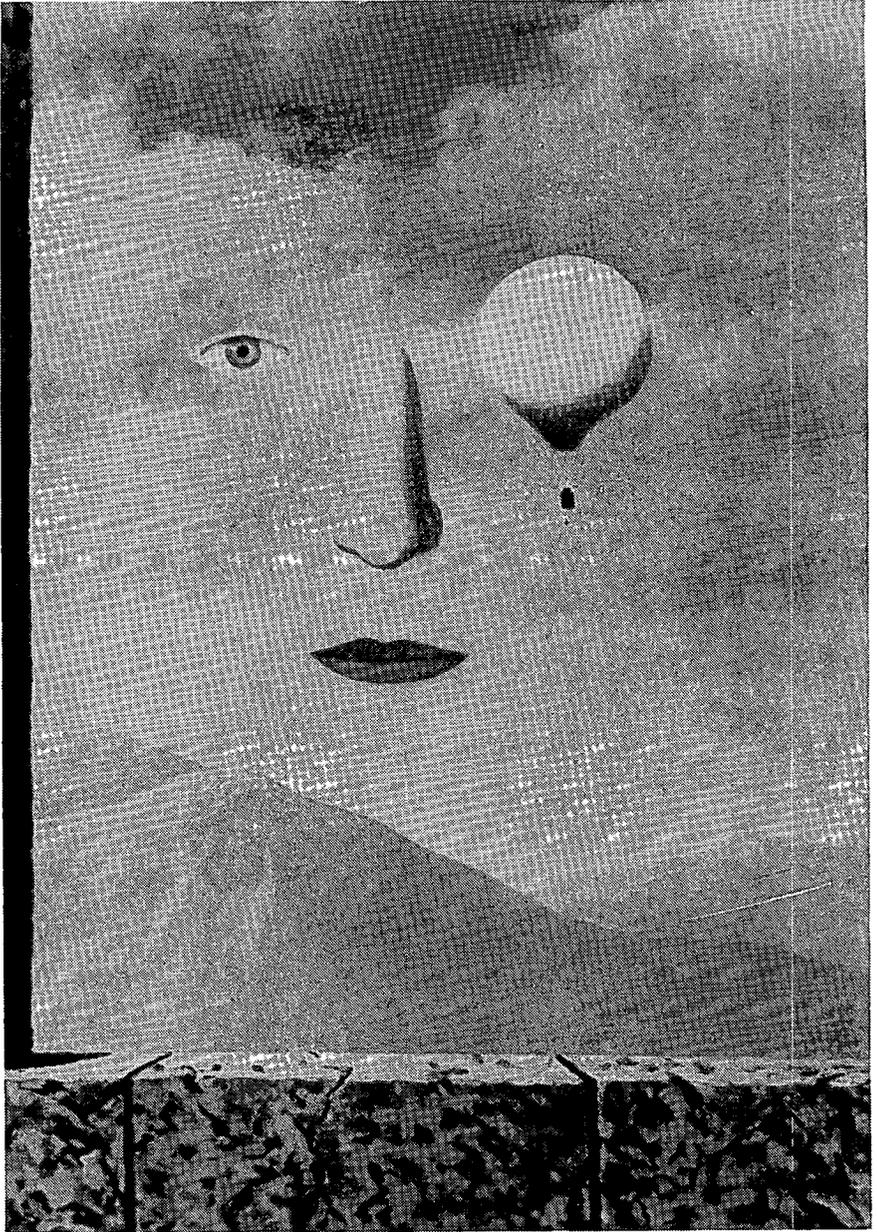
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ear and for this purpose enlist the work of the Belgian painter, René Magritte. Magritte's work is the visual counterpart and intellectual *doppelganger* to Mohr. Mohr and Magritte propose to restore the integrity of the grammatical unity. Each uses "fat incongruities" (Magritte) to make his point. Each is devoted to recreating a sense of awe. Each is devoted to reconstituting a primary experience of discovery. Each wants the world to reappear fresh and newly opened. The mutual reinforcement of Magritte and Mohr should clear eye or ear of at least one or two major dissonances. We heartily recommend daily ablutions in the imagery of both.

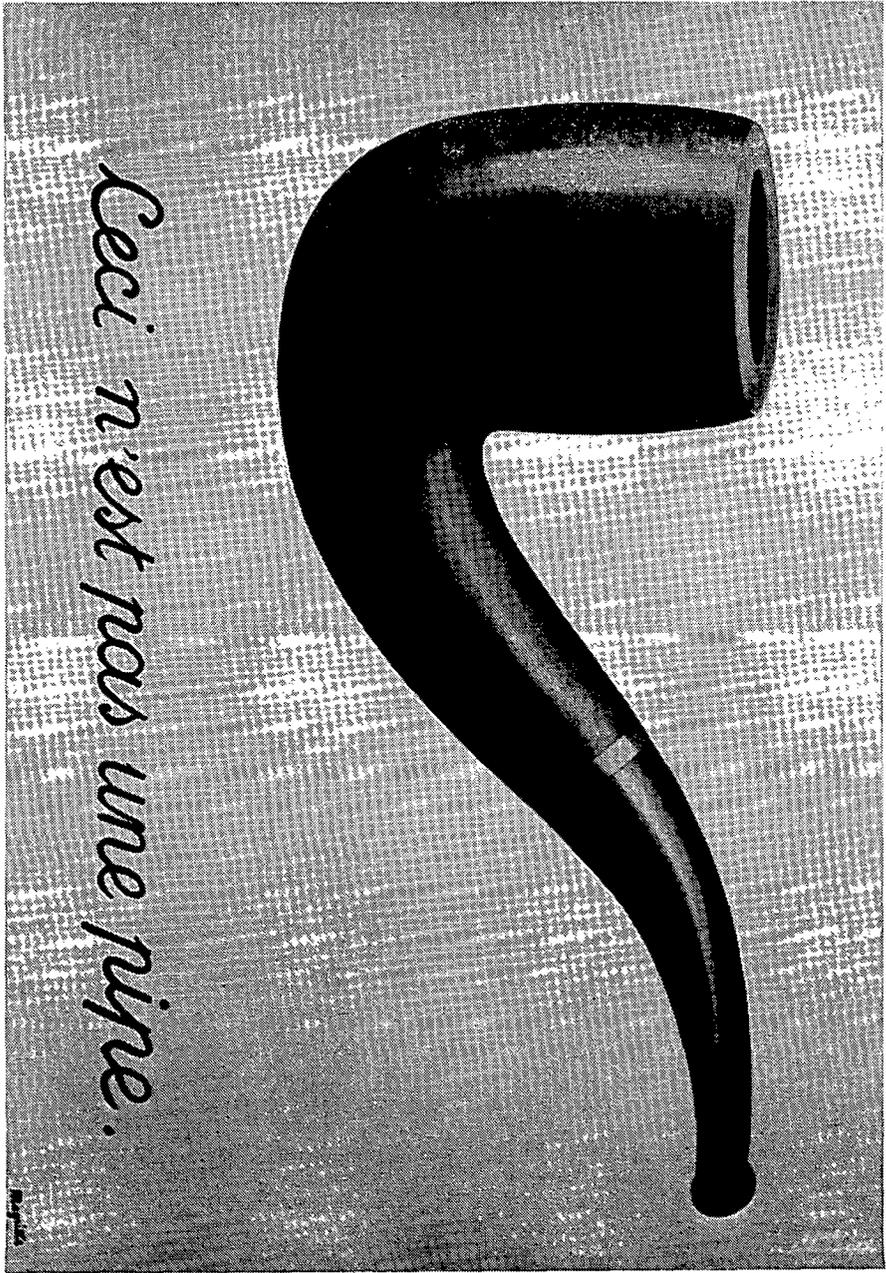
Mohr and Magritte are among the truth-sayers of transcendental consciousness. Their grammar is surreal because they know through experience and reflection (in that order) the truth of the creative imagination. Their work realizes the transformation of perception into reflection. They bring us back to a truth we conveniently forget, i.e., thought does not represent objects to itself in the experience of reflection. Ruminant is not a bovine mechanic referring to a psychic second stomach. On the contrary, reflection undertakes its transcendental project by means of images — objects which have been transformed already by their introduction into the intentional stream of one's Being-in-the-world. The schizophrenic, the body without organs, thinks in objects; indeed he thinks he is an object and the nature of his project is to flee his Being-in-the-world in order to be it. Mohr and Magritte call us back to primary intentional structures. In doing so, they consummate in an explosive re-opening upon the world the threads of the old phenomenological argument.

The world does not invite nihilation by means of universal perception grids (Merleau-Ponty) nor is it apprehended under the management of Kantian judgement (Husserl). Mohr and Magritte interrogate the life-world at the imaginary plane wherein its pure Being-for-itself becomes significant. The beholder knows that he knows when pure Being collides. All knowing is gentle gloating. All reflection is a seemingly meeting with the invisible visible. Thus the encounter with Mohr and Magritte is a dialogue with the creative imagination, for they apply Gadamer's experience of art to the life-world. With them, reflection is always a "coming home".

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The Age of Enlightenment / Le siècle des lumières. 1967. Private collection



The Betrayal of Images/La trahison des images. 1929. Los Angeles County Museum of Art