



Eleventh: Conversation with a Mountain

Online critique *The fury* by

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Exiles in language, or the eleventh letter

"...Eleventh is between ten and twelve. It's in the middle, midway, a meridian, the number of quartet.." writes Tanguy who fills word with time rhythm, as we do music and chronologies. Needless to say, the middle is still undecided, unfinished, that which is to come, neither here nor there, but elsewhere. "Middle" says Tanguy, is a means of showing that the theatre is neither an exit nor an ending, but rather a door remaining ajar, a place midstream between that which looks at us, and that which we look towards. A means for François Tanguy to underline his "cedilla" gesture, as he calls it, offering us through friendship (he writes at the end) the possibility to move. A means to pause in respect of that which has moved, before signing one's first name, and one's last. A means of reminding us that it is here, at work, in the work of words, sounds, thoughts, in a rapport of inventions that do not rhyme with conventions. Tanguy is in a rapport of sensitive intellection where reason is the guide, but not the key. In the middle of a theatre that is the space of audition rather than pleasure...of sight rather than knowledge...here where the ear and the eye partake in an infinite conversation with wit, and perhaps the inaudible impossible.

Tanguy's creations, or his stagings, distinguish themselves from a theatre that could easily be reduced to mere fable ; Tanguy's touch clashes with certain critical practice, from other such gimmicks of merchants and marketers who guarantee eternity from a mortal theatre.

To speak of Eleventh, affirming, as have others, that language is but a sensitive medium and not where we are tied to the intelligible, leads us to the realization that the word is the space for a difference, a burst, a strangeness, an attempt ... closer to groping, or stammering, or trampling ... which lead to the precise movement of thought at work, with language stepping in before the work.

And to see Eleventh, like a trace or impression of this language that soars in shards and retreats from lands, is to see its withdrawal and its resistance in the spaces of definitions, in lands of exclusions. From there, perhaps we could see Eleventh as a Babelian architecture from a grouping of quarters and streets oozing the languages of minorities, languages formed by their exiled authors, exile being the condition of poets. What is good for the language that we all strive toward is speech that, upon gaining poetry and poetic meridians, recovers a sense that everyday language had removed.

...Tanguy's work, but also, maybe more appropriately, in his stagings, is the gesture of shapers: a shaper of boards. His work and the attention he pays to materials allow for infinite balance, the escape of the endless, the fleeing of an improbable duration. Shaping (or the presence of this word "cedilla" described by Tanguy) to make heard, through the alchemic

laws of language when it is no longer digestible, as wrote Artaud, the disaccords and the tensions of a word or of art in Tanguy is to "craft in its time." To make F ring and vibrate ; the Eleventh is the bass clef, the most serious point of its gravity.

Eleventh seems, in the style of Claude Simon who thought whilst writing *The Road to Flanders* "all that can happen in one instant makes memories, images and associations in the spirit". Tanguy and the actors of the Radeau will write literary, poetic, musical, symphonic moments. They shall restore "the edge of the blade," which logically is brevity and intensity, scarcity and syncopation. Deconstructed, picked-up, condensed to the point of some precipitation, Eleventh presents not a series of paintings hanging in indecipherable order, but rather shows common ground in scattering, recurrence in the eclecticism of the broken, the eternal return of the audio and visual forms in what is linearly offered.

The big parade

In Eleventh where all proceeds from the excessive because scaling denies access to a naturalistic scene, Tanguy prefers images that bring us into more sensitive areas of the real ... On this stage, the movement of the actor, backing up, clustering ... brings to mind the gesture of a work in progress rather than theatrical illusion ... Among these artifices of odds and ends, plastic flower, colorful rifle, tiny coffin, Countess' chair, corsetted unders, unlikely hat ... kitsch dresses and other outfits are not intended to be true, but only to emphasize a travesty that goes with a trade ... This troupe of actors take and borrow from a cartoon world ... There, in the relationship of a racket "photographed" by Lautrec, in the vicinity of Chagall's loved colors, in the vicinity of the frozen King and the Mockingbird, in the area of the silent films of Keaton, in line with the busted faces of Ten... Eleventh presents fragments of scenes that form an eclectic and baroque whole, a circus where you may hear from time to time: "Have you ever suffered in your life? "

And this little world of actors and actresses who navigate under the laws of the off-road may be mistaken for those other clowns in exile. Harlequin without Rapine, Pierrot with no moon, old exhausted acrobats, whiny and depressed. From Crispin to Daumier, the tragic clown of Rouault, the self-portrait of Artaud in swollen clown form, ... clowns with raised arms, military clowns, the yellow clown of Buffet ... It is a fairground that has only a thin link to the circus. A bunch of puppets who live in the tension caused by being public entertainers, each with inner suffering. All could resemble the metaphysical clowns invented by Karl Valentin. All are, and create, the "punished clown" of Mallarmé.

And to watch the flanked cardboard headgear, their faces rouged with make-up to hide their mouths pulled tight by adhesive strips ... faces looking like the rest of a game gone wrong. A parade shaped to be Beckett's fair ...

Eleventh then ends with a cohort of actors clustered under harsh full light... a sort of faded bouquet of colorful brain tumors, a group of cockroaches who sing their distress and fatigue ... a bunch of actors like so many unhealthy characters, having finished grinning their madness in a theater, not far from the Salpêtrière assylum of the Salpêtrière, brings us closest to the pain produced by the mind in conversation with the mountains of history and memory.