

psyche in state of non-rational "visitation" - the semi-mystic state of the inner accord of a man with himself. Since it is impossible to put it into words, that is to rationalize the irrational, it must be expressed through an atmosphere. Yet the latter must adopt the form of phenomena and objects. For the artist they are accidental and secondary, but they may well distract the spectator. Thus gliding from "Mystery" to mysteriousness, from the essential to the meaningful, the public will see in a particular painting the ruins of Warsaw, the obsession of Auschwitz or the ecological danger of water pollution after an atomic explosion. The painter feels perplexed when confronted with these interpretations, for he cannot follow every spectator and explain to him that the problem lies elsewhere. That is how the message received deviates from the message transmitted, so the numerous interviews which Beksinski has granted are just a waste of time. In any case the majority of spectators will continue to discover in these paintings only what appearances suggest: a narrative message, a recounted story or at best a series of literary or philosophical symbols. And even then it will be for the most part a "philosophy" in the popular style: "We and the eternity", "ecce homo" "the way the world is going", etc. It will probably take a long time before all this fades away and disappears in the process of being viewed and reviewed, and before the essential fact of this painting's mysticism and beauty shines through without the disguise of meaningful words. Until finally a dialogue "from soul to soul" establishes itself between the artist and the spectator; an inarticulate dialogue of pure emotions.

A complex relationship exists between the painting of Beksinski and music. The relation is strong, but it runs along winding paths. It results from an "addictive" need of Beksinski's to surround himself with sounds while he works. This need is inseparable from his personality and is an inherent part of his legend. The universe of music is for Beksinski perhaps a more natural environment than the reality of his flat, or of the street which he crosses. He is incapable of painting without hearing music, but - so he claims - he never listens to it when he is not painting. These two means of creative expression are united for him in an inextricable knot of mutual dependence. Any unwitting visitor who comes to his atelier at such a time is obliged to make an immediate retreat. The loudness of the music will literally drive him out. And yet to suspect Beksinski of drawing inspiration for his painting from music is only partly justified. It is equally superficial to suspect him of entering a state of ecstasy due to the volume of the sounds.

In fact the explanation lies elsewhere and artist has often spoken of it himself; music is the only wholly and thoroughly irrational, undescrivable and, in its own way, "metaphysical" art. Its abstract and direct nature makes it possible to be transported by its light and shade without feeling the need to "understand". Its impressive atmosphere takes man through every state of spiritual satisfaction. Music enables our imagination and our human sensitivity to float in the regions of intimate shamelessness without our having to justify - even to ourselves - our innermost feelings, a piece of sentimental kitsch, or childish satisfactions. But music is also capable of expressing, far more completely than can brush and colours, that direct communication between being and soul, between reason and Mystery.

It is no coincidence that Beksinski affirms that he wants to construct his paintings as one constructs symphonies. Their architecture fascinates him to such an extent that he indicates it as his source of inspiration. The evocative force of musical poems is indeed close to his art. His paintings create analogous feelings to those aroused by romantic symphonies. But the "romanticism" of his painting is not a sublime caress of the soul. It rather represents passion and pathos, mystic terror, and mysterious reflection.

It is clear, then, that Beksinski would rather listen to 20th century music than to any other. Quite significantly he cannot stand baroque music as it is too elaborate, "rational", and based on the harmonic structure of a canon. The music he likes begins with Schubert and