

decadent attitude, despite the fact that such an outlook could be justified as we approach the turn of the century. Well aware that certain analogies inevitably end up as spiritual kitsch, he conceals his attitude behind a mask of mockery, grotesque, and even parody.

Like all men with truly complicated characters, Beksinski likes clear classifications, transparent definitions, indisputable decisions. Because his introverted nature compels him rather to descend into the depths of his "self" than to fritter away his energies in hundreds of habitual gestures, he rejects many forms of "normal" life in order to concentrate only on those he considers to be the most important. The fact that he does not participate in the life of the artistic milieu, that he solicits neither titles nor medals, that he does not go to the theatre or to other painters' exhibitions, could result from eccentricity. In truth it is an interior choice and a philosophy of life.

The hundreds of intersecting lines which can be traced in Beksinski, both the man and the painter, join together to answer the fundamental question: what should one follow - the heart or the reason? "In my particular case the borderline does not run along the alternative: representational or non-representational, tradition or avant-garde, painting or extra-pictorial means of expression. It lies elsewhere and at the same time it passes through the whole history of art that I know. It is the division between cold art and ardent art, intellectual and romantic art, and so on. One could go on multiplying the epithets. I feel close to ardent, romantic, expressive art. Never mind the language it speaks," says Beksinski. On this side of the dividing line are situated not only romanticism and expressionism, but also mysticism, mystery and madness.