

This is Not Banal or the Image as Poetic of the Banal

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ABSTRACT

Our objective in this article is to ask the question of the conceptual contribution of René Magritte's work through its relationship with meaning. Beyond trying to express the meaning of his images. Rather, it is to infringe the notion of the "banal" that Magritte has certainly articulated in his work. What is at stake in Magritte's work escapes meaning. So we are faced with an image in itself, in its poetic dimension ; thought-out production of visibility which calls for a view uncluttered from all eyes. In short, an image that sends us back to a pure visual perception.

Keywords : Banal, painted images, object images, conceptual device, visual perception.

INTRODUCTION

The artistic work is partly based on play and daydreaming. These brain activities, certainly archaic, allow, through the combination of images or abstract ideas, to discover new meanings to the world around us is in this perspective that (the banal) in the image of the game will make the object of our research.

Indeed, the different artistic practices, as well as scientific research in this field differ in terms of design, theory and technique. As a result, each artist has been able to find a way out not to redo the already done and the déjà vu. In this regard, in the Internats de Paris seminar, 1998-1999, Klinckseik, Eline Chiron in risk in art said: "In the twentieth century the rupture manifests itself as the main path that art will open up. this rupture in the process of being made (of being practiced), at its very center, causes fear, rejection and incomprehension of contemporary art "(CHIRON Eline, 1999).

So asking the question of aesthetic experience through its relationship with the (banal) as a concept of plastic order, seems enigmatic at least for our common consciousness since to evoke this question is essentially to evoke a poetry.

We find ourselves overwhelmed with concern and questioning that the mundane today remains less perceptible as mundane. Contemporary artists, particularly in their creative processes, having questioned the mundane by assigning childhood, the social and political context, the body or existence

This reading consists in highlighting the idea according to which Magritte's artistic project is based on the seizure of both everyday and banal objects, seizure of which the ultimate objective is the pictorial evocation of the mystery through the painted images.

Magritte's pictorial universe

It is possible to consider Magritte's pictorial universe as a space where images of familiar and unfamiliar objects unfold. Such a perceptual deployment could well, for a spectator, define an ambiguity or a vertigo of visibility which we propose to call a "visual shock". through and through the painting becomes a context in which events occur which free the viewer's thought from its "usual ways of thinking", just as they engage it on the path of mystery "skies and clouds, mountains, seas and beaches, birds and fish, doors, windows and tables, curtains and panels, mirrors and paintings, apples and flowers, female nudes, men in bowler hats, houses and pipes, etc. the most familiar 'it is. However, the image is not there to represent them, but on the contrary to "show them for the first time in our life" (JONGEN René-Marie, 1994, p.5).

It is nevertheless important to indicate that Magritte's pictorial project can be clarified by means of a conceptual device, like the notions of difference, indifference, pure vision, similitude and resemblance. We will then try to examine the pictoriality of the work of this painter in the double light of the concept of resemblance, and of its declination in "a resembling thought". In other words, the concept of resemblance will serve as a support for us to be able to discern both the content and the aesthetic stake of Magritian painting.

But before approaching this idea we will dwell on a remark which seems worthy of interest to us, namely that which concerns Magritte's mistrust of interpretation or even reductionism. It is on several occasions that the artist expresses this position, in that it implies his real discomfort and his serious criticism of any symbolic interpretive approach "my paintings are valid, in my eyes, if the objects they represent resist. to interpretations by symbols or by other explanations (...). The art of painting, writes Magritte, such as I conceive it represents objects in such a way that they resist the usual interpretations "; or again: "what must be painted must be irreducible to a justification that reason or unreason could find in it." What must be painted, concludes the artist, thus escapes - like the universe - from absolute justification ". (JONGEN René-Marie, 1999, p.215).

Indeed, to try to decipher the meaning of the Magritian image would be a transgression of this principle that the painter of "this is not a pipe" has frequently pronounced. And this for the following reason: that the symbolic interpretation always presents itself as a tendency towards the mastery, even towards the radical grip of meaning. This contradicts Magritte's fundamental ambition, which essentially resides in the liberation of thought, or at least the plastic liberation of the thinkable.

In short, Magritte's work escapes meaning. It is located at the strict level of what this artist calls direct contact with things. It is in this sense that the stake will consist in giving ordinary things, by virtue of the image, the possibility of "revealing themselves stripped of all the practical senses which hides them from our mind". (JONGEN René-Marie, 1994, p3).

In this context, the category of resemblance asserts itself and finds its justification in an inseparably pictorial and theoretical mode, as it allows us to understand what Magritte means by the art of painting.

In this respect, Magritte's plasticity could be understood as the meeting between resembling thought and the pictorial image. What will also be said: between a configuration by resemblance which is constituted exclusively by figures that the world offers it: people, curtains, weapons, stars, etc. and the pictorial image which is part of the objective of questioning the mystery of the world by the visible description of this resembling thought: "the art of painting really deserves to call it the art of resemblance when consists in painting the image of a thought which resembles the world".

However, two remarks seem essential to us. First, it is important to point out that Magritte distinguishes between resemblance and similitude: "the words resemblance and similitude allow you to strongly suggest the absolutely strange presence of the world and of ourselves. However, I believe that these two words are hardly differentiated, the dictionaries are hardly edifying as to what distinguishes them. It seems to me that, for example, peas between them have relations of similarity, both visible (their colors, their shapes, their dimensions) and invisible (their natures, their flavors, their heaviness.). It is the same with the false and the authentic, etc. things do not have similarities between them, they have or do not have similarities. It only belongs to the thought of being alike. She resembles by being what she sees, hears or knows. She becomes what the world offers her". (FOUCAULT Michel, 1966, pp. 85-86).

Secondly, it is essential to specify that Magritte is committed against the attitude which affirms the idea according to which the world resembles thought: ((this thought which resembles the world is to be understood by contrast with the attitude inverse according to which the world resembles thought. This second attitude due to an illusory freedom which lets the world resemble thought and it is characteristic of the scientific word which proceeds by projection of explanatory conceptions on the silence of the world" (FOUCAULT Michel, 1966, p.230).

Within this horizon the artist confronts the silence of the world, but his task does not consist in explaining it. On the contrary, he tends to let this silence "reveal its mystery".

As a result, Magritte, given that he is too fascinated by objects in their everyday and familiar existence - which could be translated by the Dasein of things", finds himself haunted by the conviction that the mystery is simultaneously a thing, widespread and little known.

In other words, it is this: that poetic invisibility does not result from the image. It is, on the other hand, inherent in the most familiar worldly visibilities. In other words, poetic language stems from what the world offers that is visible. But the resulting problem is that this familiar visibility obscures the difference⁵ of the world and its objects. It is undoubtedly in this sense that Magritte endeavors to aim his images to make visible the difference (JONGEN René-Marie : 218) of this poetic invisible, and in no way to reproduce the prosaic visible.

Any familiar visibility is indifferent, without interest (...) what is declared indifferent is the déjà vu and the already known. And what is declared different is what the too well known and the too seen make invisible. In other words, the Magritian image makes visible the invisible and the unknown of the familiar too visible. Familiar visibilities are indifferent, the poetic image on the other hand shows the difference. (JONGEN René-Marie, 1999, p.218).

Indeed, to better clarify this idea, we can rely on the example of a table entitled: clairvoyance. It is in fact a self-portrait of which we obviously see the painter at work. At first glance, everything happens as if Magritte, with his eyes fixed on the model, simply reproduces it. But as soon as we consider this motif, which is visibly an egg, and the image on the canvas, a bird, we note that Magritte's clairvoyance consists in showing in the familiar visibility itself (the model egg), the difference of their invisible thought (the bird-image). What the painter sums up: "I do not intend, said Magritte, to make people laugh or surprise them. What I'm looking for is an image that is not indifferent, and that's what surprises people. They are amazed because I am showing unknown things. And yet these are very familiar things. I paint the poetry that is in the universe of familiar objects and I seek the mystery." (JONGEN René-Marie, 1999, p218).

In order to further scrutinize the manner in which Magritte proceeded to achieve the evocation of the mystery, the emphasis will have to be placed on this enigmatic amalgamation of the familiar and the unknown. We have already indicated that Magritte always keeps a distrust with regard to the symbolic interpretation which aims at the mastery of meaning. Against this interpretation, we should now present the interpretative process to which Magritte's paintings can give rise. Such a process should be understood as an act of poetic thought. Thus, we will be able to organize this act in three stages : first of all, the painter represents banal objects which relate essentially, if not exclusively, to our daily life. This can be seen, for example, in the painting entitled "Hegel's vacation". Magritte presents two very famous objects there, a glass of water and an umbrella. We notice that these objects are first recognized separately, and that the painter strives to accentuate their isolation, which immediately suggests that we are facing a realistic pictorial procedure.

It should be noted here that Magritte disputes the notion of a how to paint. What matters is not how to paint? What substances ? What colors? Which technique ? What style ? But what is it to paint ? what to paint Ibid. Page222. ((JONGEN René-Marie, 1999, p.222).

Then, it is possible to note that the representation of banal objects constitutes a transitory moment towards the surprising association of opposites : the glass contains water and the primary function of the umbrella will be to be waterproof. Hence the unexpected encounter of two objects produces an event capable of initiating the loss of their identities.

Finally, the painting becomes a context in which an event takes place and it is this that engages the viewer in the horizon of mystery.

Paul Nougé writes: "if we then look back to the world, what was banal to the point of losing its existence in our eyes suddenly acquires a formidable and charming depth which leaves little to guess the new relationships it will maintain. with us. The universe has changed, there are no longer ordinary things ". (NOUGE Paul, 1980, p. 268).

METHOD AND MATERIAL

Case study and analysis: Table entitled "The culture of ideas" dated 1961



Figure.1 : The culture of ideas by René Magritte (1898-1967, Belgium)

"The background of the painting, distant and blurry, is articulated in three zones, going up: a pale green zone representing foliage, a zone of cloudy gray sky and finally a zone of blue sky. These three areas echo the three parts that make up the figure in the foreground. The vase, the leaves of the bouquet and finally the flowers. So far nothing but very commonplace: a bouquet of flowers placed on a shelf, according to domestic use! this bouquet of flowers seems to fulfill its traditional function of decoration perfectly. It is made up of ten flowers, as are usually the bouquets of tulips that are bought in the market. However, in the bouquet there is only one tulip which is red. The other nine, yellow variegated with brown, all exactly similar in shape, color and size, in fact present the relevant features of a pipe, but positioned like tulips." (EVERAERT-DESMEDT Nicole, 2019, p.38).

The spectator suddenly finds himself in front of a new object never seen before, a hybrid object, a bouquet of tulips which have blossomed taking the appearance of pipes.

It follows that Magritte's task consists in tearing the Dasein-being there-objects from its inauthentic conditions, namely from its practical uses, because the painter's deep conviction is reformulated as follows: "things exist outside of what we know about them and apart from any uses to which we make them serve. »(JONGEN René-Marie, 1994, p3).

From this stems Magritte's real concern. Concern according to which things can by image "reveal themselves stripped of all the practical senses which hide them from our mind." (JONGEN René-Marie, 1994, p3).

It is in this context, no doubt, that pipes and tulips lost their usual function. Therefore, it remains impossible to use pipes. This is the case with the bouquet of tulips. It loses its conventional decorative function. At the same time, it acquired a poetic function of reconciling opposites.

All of Magritte's paintings result in the evocation of mystery, thus opening up thought to indistinction. In other words, all the paintings lead according to André Breton to "a certain point of the mind from which life and death, the real and the imaginary, the past and the future, the communicable and the incommunicable, the top and the bottom cease to be perceived contradictorily. " (BRETON André, 1965 Pages 76-77).

But it is essential to specify that this enigmatic amalgam can be posed from another point of view, namely that which concerns the paradoxical relationship between the drawing and the name or the graphic inscription.

At this point, we can do a double job. First of all, it is important to point out that this "formulation of divorce", according to Foucault's expression, between the image and the text in the table "this is not a pipe", finds its justification in the framework of Magritte's famous distinction between resemblance and similitude.

In this sense, the drawing of a pipe does not resemble the object "pipe", it can only have similarities with this object. Similarity is of the order of distinction; it results, says Magritte, from an act of thought which examines, evaluates and compares.

In a second step, the painting entitled the "treason of the images" can help us to illustrate, through the three moments already indicated, the idea of the mystery evoked by this painting: a pipe is very clearly represented and identified as such, but she encounters, in the context of the painting, a proposition which claims, against all expectations, that she "is not a pipe"; thus the pipe has lost its name and identity, it is returned to the mystery which precedes any nomination and therefore any distinction. "(EVERAERT-DESMEDT Nicole, 2019, p.35).

We preserve here, the pretension term "a pre-opposition which claims", "seems to contradict", to preserve the ultimate indecision which reigns on this - as on any - poetically successful Magritian image. Because decreeing that "it is obvious, an image, an image of a pipe is in no way the intention of Magritte, who certainly did not paint this image to illustrate such banality. (EVERAERT-DESMEDT Nicole, 2019, p.67).

The unexpected encounter which provokes the visual shock in the spectator and engages him on the path of mystery, can be either between two objects, or between an object and a text which seems to contradict the drawing. In short, it is an ambivalent hybridization.

To conclude, let us recall that Magritte renounces the gaze in favor of what he himself calls pure or poetic vision, because the gaze does not see only the déjà vu of the foreseen: this is a pipe, this is a tree, this is a landscape. Thus, in "this is a pipe" the gaze triumphs because the text confirms the image it designates and the image confirms the text it illustrates ". (EVERAERT-DESMEDT Nicole, 2019, p.67).

DISCUSSION

Can the banal in Magritte's work be conceptual without losing its poetry? and can it be a praxis without deviating from its theoretical vocation!

Magritte represents a certain rather remarkable artistic sensibility by inventing formal means capable of inscribing his intentions in reality. Always and in the same investigation, other artists find themselves confronted with the delicate problem of making the invisible visible by relying on the visible. Byzantine painters could not be content with hoping that devotees would view their works with bodily eyes. So, it is a paradoxical situation, since they were to somehow "show the invisible", in an entire universe permeated by religious faith.

The formal means employed by Magritte are worthy of his ambitions, whatever one thinks of them. Do after the earthquake of abstraction ; he manages to reconcile in the same movement the efficient memory of the painting and the iconoclasm of its repudiation. The intensity of the "banal" of his surrealist paintings serves as a guarantee here. The artist relies on this quality page to promote a speculative construction that articulates the visible, the object and the invisible in a poetic gesture, the presence of his pictoriality then allowed only to the eyes of the mind.

Admittedly, Magritte, through this reflection, disrupts the mimetic protocol, he sends back all the classic representations in an overhang. The impregnation of a work is not a specific charge of "pure pictorial sensibility", it is not an idea, a project that anyone could seize on to embody or update it here or there, as they wish. Magritte's mode of creation is, as we can see, too dependent on a way of thinking resulting from the incarnation for it to be conceivable to reconstitute, in its objects, although it may seem easy to do so.

At first glance and following the example of this specific reading and analysis, we tried to explain how the images painted by Magritte manage to free the viewer's thought by evoking the mystery. Thus the artist intends to arouse a kind of playful voyeurism in the viewer-voyeur achieved by the latter's reaction to the conceptual aspect and by his involvement in the work and his commitment to (read).

Delors Magritte through his images represents banal, prototypical objects. Taken out of their usual context into one of isolation. Immediate readability is guaranteed by a very refined sensitivity to matter in a realistic style, that is to say standardized, conventional, absolutely in accordance with the habits of seeing. Thus Magritte expects an emotional reaction from the viewer and produces this emotional investment in him.

CONCLUSION

This plastic experience, however, has dethroned a whole classical system and put it on the wrong track, but it sends us back to a conceptual, spiritual atmosphere. This is the consequence of contemporary aspects, par excellence, which allow a rather important conceptual and spiritual interiority concerning both the idea and the matter.

To engage in this artistic reading, to express its meaning in order to smell its juice, we have made certain efforts that raise us above ourselves. What surprises us the most in Magritte's work is the strategy of the sensitive of extreme existential subtlety.

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