



Destinies

LOUIS BOUDREAU

EXHIBITION - 10 OCTOBER - 2 NOVEMBER 2013

ALBEMARLE

GALLERY

49 ALBEMARLE STREET
LONDON W1S 4JR UK
T +44 (0)20 7499 1616
F +44 (0)20 7499 1717
INFO@ALBEMARLEGALLERY.COM
WWW.ALBEMARLEGALLERY.COM

ON THE COVER

BOWES-LYON TECHNIQUE MIXTE / 7X5 / 2013

PHOTOS CREDITS

MAXIM GENDRON-MORIN
JEAN-CLAUDE LUSSIER
DANIEL ROUSSEL
PAUL TOURENNE

GRAPHIC DESIGN

CÉSAR MONCHABLON

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

NO PART OF THIS PUBLICATION MAY BE REPRODUCED IN ANY FORM
OR BY ANY MEANS WITHOUT THE PRIOR PERMISSION IN WRITING OF
THE PUBLISHER.

FIRST EDITION : JUNE 2013

PROJECT

TONY CONTONE FOUNDING DIRECTOR

ORGANIZATION

HAN ART GALLERY MONTRÉAL
ALBEMARLE GALLERY

GALLERY MANAGER

ANDY SOMÉFORD

SALES MANAGER

ALESSANDRO LORENZETTI



EDWARD HUAC

SMITH

LOUIS BOUDREULT

In contemporary art we are now well accustomed to images that celebrate equally contemporary heroes and heroines of all kinds. Andy Warhol's images of Marilyn Monroe, Elvis Presley, Chairman Mao are cases in point. So too are Chuck Close's giant portraits of some of his contemporaries – the composer Philip Glass, for example – though he insists that he paints them simply because he happens to know and be known to them.

We are also familiar with the fascination of old photographs. We tend to find old photographs of children particularly touching, for several reasons. Both the clothes and the actual physical attitudes of their small subjects evoke past epochs more powerfully than any description in words. The photographs of the seven year old Alice Liddell, made in 1860 by Charles Dodgson, summon up an image of Victorian childhood that is reinforced, but not in essentially changed, by the fact that we know that the Alice portrayed by the camera is the eponymous heroine of the children's classics written by Dodgson and published under the pseudonym 'Lewis Carroll'.

Photographs of children from bygone epochs also lead us to think about the adults they became. Sometimes, when the subject is famous, we think we know the full story. On other occasions, when the child is anonymous, we have to speculate. Did this clear-eyed young boy, photographed in Britain c. 1900, go on to become one of the millions of young soldiers who died in the First World War? Or did he survive to live through the 1920s and 1930s, perhaps dying in the mid-1970s as a respected father and grandfather?

Louis Boudreault, with great originality, turns these speculations upside down. Time flows, not forwards, but directly backwards. How, he asks, did familiar culture heroes and major political figures look when they were very young? Here is the infant Picasso, the infant Chairman Mao, the infant John F. Kennedy, even the infant Edith Piaf. The portraits are derived from photographic originals. It reminds me of some sentences by Vladimir Nabokov, in *Speak Memory*, his volume of memoirs. "I witness with pleasure [Nabokov says] the supreme

achievement of memory, which is the masterly use it makes of innate harmonies when gathering to its fold the suspended and wandering tonalities of the past.” And then, in the next paragraph: “Through a tremulous prism, I distinguish the features of relatives and familiars, mute lips serenely moving in forgotten speech.”

Technically the images are extremely elaborate – layer after layer of paper collage, with additions in graphite, charcoal and pastel, laid on a wooden panel. The finished works are often quite large – as much as 6 or 7 feet tall, thus very much larger than the snapshots or small cabinet photographs they seem to evoke. This huge enlargement of a photographic portrait image seems to link them to the work of Chuck Close, a celebrated North American artist of an earlier generation. Close has often asserted that the images he makes, though recognizable likenesses, both of himself and of people he knows, are not to be thought of as portraits in any conventional sense, but simply as images of heads – something which raises issue I will try to discuss a little later in this essay.

First, I think, it is useful to discuss the ambiguity of Boudreault’s actual technique. Collage is, much more so perhaps than painting or drawing, a directly additive process. Yet Boudreault would also like it to be seen as a method of stripping away – removing layers, to reach a long buried image. This impression is reinforced by a piece of sleight of hand. The sides of the panels are bound with paper strips. These suggest that the image manifests itself from layer on layer of paper – that is, if we peeled off the image we see, then there would be another one beneath it, then yet another, but in this case pro-

gressing into the future rather than into the past. Peel away enough layers, and you would find the subject of the portrait as he or she was in maturity, or even in extreme old age. The fiction is that more layers you take away, the closer you get to the celebrated individual, as the whole world knew him or her. Yet the fundamental thing, the bedrock of individual character, is already present in the portrait of the child.

There is, however, another significant element, and it is here that I return to Chuck Close. All the subjects of these works, like the vast majority of Close’s images, are gazing directly at the spectator. This is unusual in Western portraiture, where, more often than not, the subjects glance away. However there are exceptions – Holbein’s image of Henry VIII, for instance, or Dürer’s celebrated Self Portrait of c. 1500 in the Alte Pinakothek in Munich. The direct gaze is emblematic of authority – it asserts authority, as we immediately sense when looking at Holbein’s image of the Tudor monarch. It also, as the Dürer portrait tells us, has something to do with our sense of the sacred. Dürer’s painting is modeled on the established Byzantine image of the Pantocrator (Christ the All-Ruler). The great images of the Pantocrator, such as the huge 11th to 12th century mosaic of Christ at Monreale in Sicily, are often well over life-size.

In other words, these images by Boudreault, also well over life-size, though not as big as the mosaic at Monreale, appeal to our innate sense of the sacred – the sacredness of genius, the sacredness of power. They show genius and power in embryo, but unmistakably present. This is what makes them peculiarly memorable – they linger in the mind.





IN NUMINOUS

CHORUS :

THE AURATIC PORTRAITURE OF LOUIS BOUDREAULT

“I WITNESS WITH PLEASURE THE SUPREME ACHIEVEMENT OF MEMORY, WHICH IS THE MASTERLY USE IT MAKES OF INNATE HARMONIES WHEN GATHERING TO ITS FOLD THE SUSPENDED AND WANDERING TONALITIES OF THE PAST.”

NABOKOV

“IN THE DEPTHS OF THE FOREST YOUR IMAGE FOLLOWS ME.”

RACINE

«WHEN WE SPEAK OF NATURE IT IS WRONG TO FORGET THAT WE ARE OURSELVES A PART OF NATURE. WE OUGHT TO VIEW OURSELVES WITH

THE SAME CURIOSITY AND OPENNESS WITH WHICH WE STUDY

A TREE, THE SKY OR A THOUGHT, BECAUSE WE TOO ARE LINKED TO THE ENTIRE UNIVERSE.»

MATISSE

“WHY SPEAK OF PAINTING, AGAIN? AND WHY WRITE ABOUT IT? TO SAY WHAT IN THE END CAN NEVER HAVE BEEN COMPLETELY, EXHAUSTIVELY, SAID; TO SAY JUST PART OF IT, TO RETRAVERSE A SLICE OF TIME IN WHICH THAT PAINTING CAME BACK LIKE A HAUNTING ENIGMA, A PROBLEM, A QUESTION; TO KEEP THE “MINUTES” OF THAT TRAVERSAL, TO STOCKPILE THE READINGS DONE, QUESTIONED, REVISITED, INEXHAUSTIBLE; TO PRODUCE DAZZLING, SOMETIMES PATIENT, OFTEN INADEQUATE TRACES OF THESE READINGS.”

LOUIS MARIN



rethinking

representation



JAMES

CAMPBELL

|
LOUIS BOUDREAULT
|

Think of louis boudreault as the gifted inventor of the visual arts equivalent of an audiophile's turntable, the nec plus ultra, say the continuum caliburn. But one designed to play its subject's music backwards, rather than forwards, through time. This painter rolls back the decades his subjects have lived, and discovers in so doing something like their inviolable essence, vital personality, innermost traits. Also, their pain, still in its kernel, as yet undecanted—and, perhaps most importantly, the incandescent promise held tremulously within them like an anfractuous seed that will one day sprout in the lifeworld like none other.

Through the quartzite prism of a truly implacable and sophisticated optic, Boudreault makes it possible for our memories of the subjects of his paintings to likewise speak, and eloquently too, of prior acquaintance, admiration, respect, affection, longing, even unrequited love. He encourages us to distinguish the features of his subject's younger from older selves, living from dead, celebrities we have known well from those we have almost forgotten. In young faces, we glimpse a trajectory very much our own, a perilous transit from innocence to wisdom and back again.

Boudreault has a gift not only for remembering and rendering faces, but for redeeming them from the temporality that is theirs' to claim as a function of aging. How he achieves this temporal reversion has a lot to do with his optic, one that sees human beings as interwoven with the myriad patterns of the world. He knows that we are all, as Matisse said, part of nature and that this truth should never be forgotten. He takes Matisse's instruction to heart—and mind: "we ought to view ourselves with the same curiosity and openness with which we study a tree, the sky or a thought, because we too are linked to the entire universe."

Such curiosity is profoundly philosophical in nature. But Boudreault thinks with his optic. And while the lips of his subjects may be closed, open or moving in mute speech, as Vladimir Nabokov once held of his own remembered and cherished ones, their eyes are wide open.¹ In the deep, dark and seemingly bottomless well of those eyes, there is a supplication less theirs than our own, as we immerse ourselves

therein with alacrity and are moved and freshened by sundry memories provoked and recognitions pursued.

Boudreault is a rare savant at conjuring up truth and authenticity from portraits that practice a retroactive art of mnemonic seizure and commemoration, even memorialisation, even though the latter is never their *raison d'être*. Still one commemorates what one covets, and his pantheon of celebrities whets our covetousness.

Just as one desires a first edition book signed by its author, or a photograph of someone revered signed by its subject, Boudreault's portraits possess such phenomenal virtuosity that we want to experience them firsthand, at close quarters and forever after.

His is also an art of serene investiture of self and aura-laden restoration. He speaks to our collective memory, which then in its turn speaks of the changes wrought by time—nameless violence, psychic ruptures and physical attrition—and proceeds to specify what, with a consummately delicate brush or iron, remains the same and what has undergone chameleon-like transformation as we identify his young subjects for ourselves with a slow dawning recognition. Boudreault reminds us that memory is never static, and seldom effaced.

As we connect the dots between their childhoods and their adult lives, as we leaf through the thick mnemonic photo albums we all

carry around inside our heads of the notables amongst us, whether it be andy warhol or marguerite duras, winston churchill, chairman mao or francis bacon, boudreault summons them up, calls them forth from the dewy, idyllic meadowlands of their youth, and spurs a recognition that returns us knowingly to the archeo-psychic past, embedded memories and the ground of the figure itself.

I say “iron” as in “clothing iron” in addition to brush because the level of formal invention in boudreault’s practice is very high, and stimulatingly so, and the iron is his signature instrument rather than traditional brush and paint can. To see him “ironing” down fragments of handmade paper onto his pressed palimpsest over gessoed hardboard rather than simply daubing there, is to appreciate the sheer radicality—and the high stakes—in achieving his paintings as wholly unified, totally unforeseen things. He builds his palimpsests from the ground floor on up like a gifted carpenter or dry mason: a bare wood substructure is the support onto which myriad papers are ironed down onto the plane, resulting in a support rich with the stored labours of his thoughts and activities, with multiple epidermal strata that waylay all the voices of time. The applied charcoal then delineates forms, which are subsequently transformed into the outer epidermis—the breathing skin—of the portrait proper. A portrait by boudreault is more than a portrait. It is a paradigm not only of what is in mind to say about that other whose face is so familiar to us, but also a paradigm of the process dimension, the much-vaunted act of making, where expression assumes physicality.

Process reigns supreme here.

If boudreault’s paintings achieve real presence and immanence and stake a singular claim upon us as a result, it is because he amplifies the auratic volume of his portraits not just through random acts of accretion—but methodically through acts of consistent and radical subtraction. This rethinking of representational codes in his manifestly reductive art evokes and works through an aesthetic of absence. In spite of the perceived thickness of the support—a lovely mirage, really, or red herring since the sheer depth of the palimpsest is only literal around the edges of the wood support—boudreault methodologically eliminates any detail, figural or colouristic—that might yield an extraneous effect or a baroque accent.

As french philosopher jean-luc nancy wrote: “the entire history of representation—that entire fevered history of the gigantomachies of mimesis, of the image, of perception, of the object and the scientific law, of the spectacle of art, of political representation—is thus traversed by the fissure of absence, which, in effect, divides into the absence of the thing (problematic of its reproduction) and the absence within the thing (the problematic of its [re]presentation).²

Beyond this relevance to the history of representation, the absence here is binary—it works on both the material level of literally pairing down and the metaphorical level of invoking not only absent time but the literal absence of his subjects. They are now embedded in our collective cultural memory, and our affection for them and attention to them stems from our own memories of their person, their reputation—and their works. This lends poignancy to the experience

of these paintings, and the work deepens as a result. Not into a dimension of sentimentality, but into a sense of loss that has nothing to do with commemoration per se.

Boudreault works in a vein of progressive erasure, of winnowing down, deliberate elision, followed by delicate feints and parries of mark making on the way back up to the ground plane of representation. The colours of the collaged papers themselves inflect the backdrop and deliver his figures into the foreground of our attention, our focus. Yes, boudreault's is a reductive art. I have never seen one of his portraits fatten into baroque shapes, or fall into an array of overwrought forms. One is often reminded of the faces in pontormo's visitation (parish church of Carmignano, Tuscany). The eyes seem to gaze out at us, into us, through us, timeless and undesiring, unavoidable in their interiority and understated intensity, at once transparent and opaque, not quite human and yet wholly human.

As Jean-Luc Nancy argued: "painting goes straight to the heart of the matter, that is, of the mystery. It does not remove or resolve this mystery, nor does it make it an object of belief; rather it implants itself within it, so to speak."³

So, too, boudreault implants in his viewers an appreciation of embodiment and history, something that is less nostalgia than a commemorative urge, and the attrition of time. He unpeels the temporal whirligig around his subjects like an onion, decanting something like truth. Of

course, in a boudreault painting, we do not have the "convolution and tumult of cloth rippling with folds, sinuosities and billowing curves" that Nancy speaks of in Pontormo (this would be too baroque, too much figural action painting for him) but we do still have the mystery—and we have, of course, the eyes.⁴ The eyes have it.

We also have a vast imperturbable calm together with a strange excitement or, better, fascination. And that is more than enough. The eyes seize us and see through us. They are prehensile, those eyes, as prehensile as a chimpanzee's thumb, and just as telling. They have us from the outset, from the first instant of seeing, such is their almost-photographic hyper-verisimilitude—and hold us in their thrall, effortlessly. The eyes are the same respectively in the works of Pontormo and Louis Boudreault. They are the eyes of a child, yes, a young person even, but if the eye never changes from birth until death, they also betray the full spectrum of a life yet to be lived. They are the talismanic harbingers of all that is yet to be.



resonant

facture



THE ASPECT OF MAKING **IS CENTRAL**

TO BOUDREAULT'S PORTRAITURE

He first prepares a wood panel with either of these measurements: 6' x 4' or 7' x 5' (although he occasionally makes smaller paintings).

He then covers this panel with drawing paper. Tonalities must range from white to off-white. Boudreault begins with an elaborate drawing (a decisive step which can take several days) and he then constructs a costume, using coloured sheets of paper. He proceeds to methodically create an environment that surrounds the subject, using stains,

lines and sanding. He encloses the work within the panel's vertical sides by affixing several layers of paper strips to its left and right sides. These convey the impression that the artwork is glued onto an accumulation of sheets, all of which are secured by steel fasteners. This duplicity lends the work the sense of a vast sheaf of former lives. In one sense, there is a similarity to the multiple coats that build physicality and chromatic depth in the painting of a monochrome. But boudreault's paintings are the furthest things imaginable from monochromes. The thick dimensionality yields the sense of a life lived, endlessly receding memories and days past. The works are then signed, titled and (if necessary) dedicated at the back.

Let us retrace stages in the facture, with an eye to opening up the painting. There is simulation here—and a spectacular order of dissimulation as well. There is no accumulation of sheets as such, but there is palimpsest. The palimpsest is the bulk of collaged-on sheets of coloured and neutral coloured paper, decoupage-like, which while it lacks the “thickness” that we have been tricked into believing lies beneath, is still highly resonant of an environment that is overwhelmingly tactual—and enjoys ontological depth and heft. But the binary issue of simulation and dissimulation is not, we sense, important to boudreault. What is important—all that is important—is finally, as it is for any painter, what remains on the final surface of things, the “coming” surface which is rife with its own spectres of depth, the surface that arrives like derrida's l'avenir which has no precedent and no precursor, but which arrives on the threshold of vision like a person announcing a future tense never to be realized at least not right now.

There is a phenomenal delicacy in the act of making here that bears commenting upon. Iron firmly in hand boudreault is no sullen handmaiden to the domesticity of this painting facture. Better call him its resolute midwife, because only in this manner—methodical layering, methodological sedimentation, and careful delivery, sans caesura—could such hauntingly alive and vital works of art be born out of the void, fully expressive, and encased in their sumptuous swaddling cloths, circumstances and surrounds.

One such work is his portrait of a young and wilful andy warhol, before rumours of spoilage and near-ruin set in, almost girl-like, a ravenous innocence in the features and the eyes. Then we look closer and closer again and register the fact that perhaps warhol's eyes were never innocent at all, even as a child, but always knowing, feral, on the prowl. But the eyes are the same—the self-same as those after the shooting and the other scars. They have not changed. They are the same. Boudreault captures and works from this captivating fact: from birth to death, the eyes of a human being remain the same.

This is most movingly demonstrated in boudreault's own self-portrait, where the young painter's face reads like prophecy, the dark eyes expressive of a desire to know, name and identify that nameless other who inhabited his young mind.

For all the talk of darkening and dying, denigration and denial of vision

and the optic in our thinking culture, the eyes remain, as noted earlier, identifiable and unchanged. Such is the case with boudreault's warhol, churchill, duras, j.F.K. And all those others that he has so memorably put to paint. He seizes on his subjects in their "tender" youth—and yet his portraits are ineluctably of the whole person, young and old. The eyes know. They reveal all: past, present and future and hold us within an infinite present tense, on the threshold of the image and transfixed by it.

Since youth, i have been infatuated with the books of vladimir nabokov and marcel proust, and i feel that both bodies of work segue with the deep thematics of boudreault's painting—namely, where time, aura and memory are all implicated. Poetry, too, if truth be told. If i cite nabokov in particular here, it is perhaps because his memory work reminds me of boudreault's in its elegance, cohesiveness and thoroughness. Its patina grows ever more resonant, thicker and deeper as time and rereading goes on, just as boudreault's paintings do as we look and look again and again.

In speak, memory, the memoir that nabokov wrote in fragments during the 1940s, reconstituted in book form in 1952 and then again in the 1960s, he recovers from his past the scaffolding for a comprehensive poetic reverie of his early life.⁵ It is similar to the entirely humane paintings of louis boudreault. We may not remember where and when we first laid eyes on those paintings, but from thenceforth we were hooked, awakened once again to the enabling power of a vision that has vertical depth. If nabokov's memoir was deeply autobiographical, boudreault's portraits are profoundly biographical—though not just. The images he secures of his

subjects when young have to touch a chord in his psyche, first, and if this chord is not touched, a portrait will simply be impracticable for him. He has parted ways with a subject when such a caesura has occurred. They are, thus, deeply autobiographical as well in their own way.

Boudreault conveys the feverish working through and intertwining of inner and outer selves with poetic efficacy in his paintings. His own self-portrait betrays his own haunting. But the gravitas in it—or in any of his portraits, for that matter—is never so intense as to qualify as a lead weight. Instead it buoys us up with the recognition that the author is here to celebrate and commemorate at once—and not to give way to mournfulness or mute regret.

In a commentary on speak, memory, jonathan yardley wrote:

“The development of the inner and outer self, and attending properly to that task can only plunge the author into the abyss of self. The successful memoirist is the one who explores self in ways in which others can see perhaps a glimmer of their own selves and who retains throughout the redeeming quality of self-deprecation.”⁶

Nabokov may have been obsessed by his past, but boudreault is no hostage to his. Say rather, he is obsessed with ours. I mean our culture, here and now, and his salutary attempt is to supplant the horrors of the present in favour of something like stoicism and hopefulness, reminding us of the golden world before the rot set in, human beings vitrified—and empathy failed. His portraits are luminous. Surely, the impulsion that

drives him is neither one of commemoration nor of memorializing a given subject, but one of auratic visualization. He instills vital life in his subjects, and grants them a vivacious aura. It is we, his viewers who are, as a result, haunted by the past. Haunted collectively, say, by all those photos of Kennedy just before—and during—the assassination—that fly into the well of memory, and are drowned there, as we view boudreault’s youthful, hopeful, vibrant image salvaged from the dead president’s brave youth—and are somehow, in some way, auratically subsumed by it.

Nabokov wrote: “the act of vividly recalling a patch of the past is something that i seem to have been performing with the utmost zest all my life.” And later: “i witness with pleasure the supreme achievement of memory, which is the masterly use it makes of innate harmonies when gathering to its fold the suspended and wandering tonalities of the past.”⁷

Boudreault subtly insinuates, rather than roughly or haphazardly constructs. He is meticulous in his way, nimble and deft in suggesting likeness, and achieving something in graphite and fugitive incidents of color that transcend all the virtues and verities of verisimilitude. Exactly how he achieves this is beyond the compass of language. The pursuit of such incandescent patches and passages is tireless in the paintings under discussion here.

The choice of the luminaries he has gathered into the fold is intrinsically interesting because it reveals the mark they have left upon him throughout life. No zealot he, but Louis Boudreault, like Nabokov before

him, places each chosen subject within the context of his or her own childhood, and there is never any indication that semiotic contrasts with his own past have any meaning or relevance, but that is the hallmark, after all, of an interior art that aspires to objectivity, amidst all the semiotic exotica still in play.

Whether or not boudreault, like nabokov, grew up in a prestigious down home st. Petersburg townhouse or on prosperous estates south of that city has no bearing upon the matter. In a sense, boudreault renounces his own personal biography in the making of these portraits. In another sense, of course, they are indistinguishable from his own history: they are the product of his hand, his imagination, his eye, his mind.

His sensibility is to be found everywhere within them, from the bluish pattern in an apron to the dark vaults of eyes that do not turn away, but hold us taut between fascination and embarrassment. Furthermore, why excavate the past of his chosen subjects, if not to excavate his own, and make memory speak for both? The abiding need to perform an archaeological dig on childhood memories is universal, after all. His portraiture speaks eloquently of archeo-psychic time at its most spinal, seismic and unassailable.





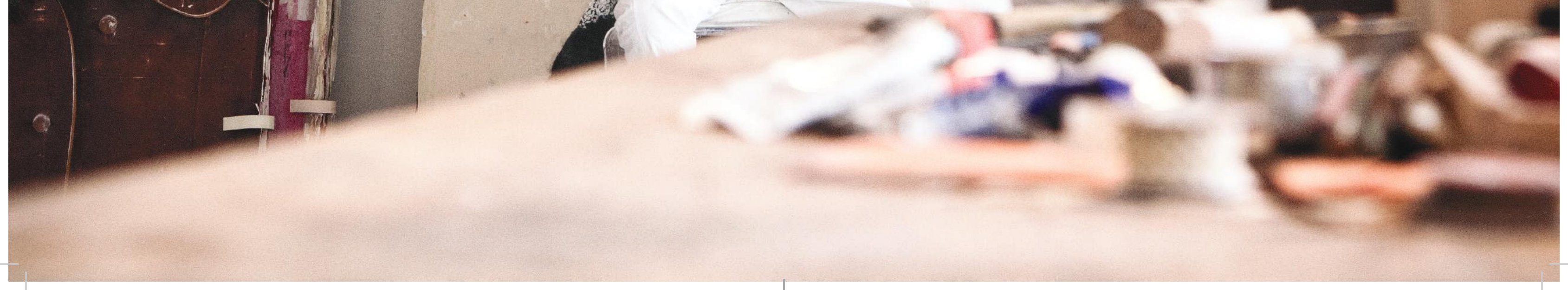
collector

of souls ?



EXPO à Londres

EXPO PUSAN





sculpting

with scissors

JAMES

CAMPBELL

|
PAPERS
|

During the last fifteen years of his life, henri matisse developed his quintessential artistic breakthrough—one of many in a career known for its extraordinary restlessness—by «cutting into colour” which in one sense meant cutting the umbilical cord to his earlier work.

In another sense of course, it marked a moment of profound continuity in his creative vision. By running scissors through prepared sheets of paper, he inaugurated one of the most beguiling chapters of his long,

illustrious career. Such was the casual authority of his eye and hands that he cut the forms out freehand. He would use a tiny pair of scissors and saved both the item cut out and the remaining scraps of paper—which he hoarded assiduously in his archive.

Like matisse, louis boudreault surveys the full array of what he wants to arrange and rear- range on the original plane and fix in time and place there. His own archive is vast. He will roam libraries and image banks and internet arrays to find youthful portraits of his chosen subjects. Those subjects then become participants in a real and vital drama of making that runs the gamut from drawing and painting to sculpture.

Certainly the sheer level of formal invention and sensuous palette found in matisse’s papiers coupés remain without precedent or parallel in the pantheon and prefigure boudreault’s numi- nous portraiture.

According to matisse’s daughter, marguerite duthuit, matisse employed «gouached-paper cutouts», and yet pierre matisse adopted what has become the lasting designation of gouache decoupée. As opposed to just cutting ordinary sheets of paper, matisse often used sumptuous paper stock and toiled endlessly to achieve just the right gouache tone. In boudreault’s case, he is a more wide-ranging scavenger and often collages fabric as well as paper onto the lane, but in a very subtle and unobtrusive way, so that a sense of pattern becomes an epiphany in its own right.

As Matisse did, he often asks a studio assistant to affix the fabric remnants and papers to the ground with a clothing iron. Boudreault monitors the whole process with intense vigilance. Each colour choice and each placement is crucial as the palimpsest is being built up, erased, built up again and again. The calibration of the overall plane is slow, methodical, and can be as disruptive as it is smooth sailing. With cut out papers and colours in hand, the painter begins an arduous process of finessing the palimpsest, in order to achieve a co-extensive state of material subtlety and visual intensity.

Commentators have often pointed out that Matisse was more akin to a sculptor than a painter in his use of this innovative medium of expression. Still, a drawing regimen ruled the roost, as it does for Louis Boudreault. Still, it is worth pointing out that his art of palimpsest portraiture is also essentially a matter of making sculpture, akin to making drywall, and the “painting” achieves a real sense of being an object in space, even when confined to the wall plane.

Unlike Matisse, Boudreault, having cut out the shapes, does not pin them to the walls of his studio. Instead, he irons them onto the surface of his painting like plaster on a drywall. They are worked through and rendered on the hard board, ironed-on and subsequently appraised as he builds up the palimpsest until the desired threshold of density in the face and torso had been reached. Boudreault, like Matisse before him, reads the pieces of paper like a sort of Braille, inveigling sense slowly, as though he could read the palimpsest through the very pores of his skin. To see his works in the process of fermentation reminds us of his

gifts when it comes to appraising the particularly physical nature of these works.

While preparing for a major exhibition in Tokyo in 1951, Matisse was interviewed by Japanese artist, philosopher, and poet Riichiro Kawazhima and he had this to say: «I cut paper, but I'm drawing with the scissors. The drawings I obtain by cutting paper are, in a sense, an abstraction. That is why they aren't limited to one thing or one meaning, they seem to vary infinitely depending on who is looking at them». Similarly, Boudreault cuts his papers and chooses judiciously what to iron onto his palimpsests, but his myriad acts of drawing extend far beyond the reach of his scissors, and it is his remarkable drawing skills that pull everything into the whirlpool that will resolve itself into the final portrait; say, that of the young Pablo Picasso, indomitable in his demeanour even then, and with a gravity that pulls us ineluctably within its orbit like moths to the flame.

Boudreault has always been, and this right back to the very origins of his project, most experimental with the support he chooses, materials he uses and the means of facture itself. “Painting with scissors,” Matisse said, and this enabled him to express what “constitutes my real self: free, liberated.” We have a suspicion that Boudreault, too, found his real self and true artistic freedom when he discovered the palimpsest method of portraiture and used cut-outs, both building up and methodically paring down, to reach back through time and envision his subjects in their tender youth. Matisse's cut-outs are certainly a touchstone for Boudreault's art of phenomenal archeo-psychic capture and ecstatic commemoration.



speak

memory



JAMES

CAMPBELL

MONTREAL, MARCH 22, 2010

Quiet—and quietly alluring—but always highly charged and provocative in their mien, boudreault’s portraits speak of memory and restitution, atavisms spelt backwards and the anfractuous voices of time.

He achieves something like hard-won synthesis. I have kept vigil in his studio, watched the birthing process and slow build-up of the subject, but have never been certain as to the moment of arrival. Suddenly, a threshold of expression is reached, an image arrived at, a likeness attained which, if truth be told, transcends mere likeness and becomes

almost a spiritual surrogate. And then, like a proverbial ventriloquist’s dummy, the subject is made to speak. And this is no babble, no speaking in tongues, but a rich idiom of those homeward bound (to the past), and outward reaching (to the future).

If they are also rife with the hooks of real presence, numinous absence, of what has been left unsaid and what remains luminously self-present within their frames, louis boudreault’s paintings call to us not from an exorbitant outside—as though we could ever make that leap, however empathic our capacities, and, yet, perhaps we can and must, as we strive to each day in the lifeworld, in relation to the other—but from deep within ourselves. They rarely, if ever, disappoint. Empathy never fails here, and the constitutive onus the painter places upon himself—and us, his viewers—has never been greater than in this sundered world of ours with wars breaking out everywhere and the value of life itself sullied and spoiled.

Louis boudreault forces us a question upon us, the same asked by louis marin:

“Pourquoi parler d’un tableau, à nouveau? Et souvent, pourquoi en écrire? Dire ce qui en fin de compte ne pourra jamais être complètement, exhaustivement, dit; en dire une partie seulement, reparcourir une tranche de temps où ce tableau est devenu comme une hantise, une énigme, un problème, une question; conserver les ‘minutes’ de ce parcours, archiver ces lectures faites, mises en question, reprises, iné-

puisables, produire des traces de ces lectures, fulgurantes, parfois patientes, besogneuses souvent.”¹⁴

And, if we choose to answer that question which is also clarion call to look close and then more closely still, if we heed that mellifluous inner voice, we will be all the richer as a result. There is no denying it. Boudreault, heir to Nabokov, Proust, and Matisse, makes paintings that not only have the power to transport us to another time, another place, but offer us in resonant chorus

Environments in which Mnemosyne, at once the strongest and most fragile of human faculties, and, in any case, a very beguiling muse, is made to speak, and eloquently, too, of our finitude and our promise, of what it means to be human and to yearn after transcendence. And so he puts paint to the first flower of our humanity.

In so doing, in evoking the mother of all the muses and, for that matter, of all art, both his subjects and his viewers are restored to that state of paradisaical youth, when the optic was self-same but the world itself seemed so much younger, if not wiser, and a latter-day swathe of darkness had yet to settle across the vast figural array of the lived world like some demented cry of calamitous ending and sorrow. Louis Boudreault, on the other hand, is all about the delicate art of beginnings—and attendant moments of pure, unmitigated joy.



A close-up photograph of a hand holding a pencil, poised to draw on a piece of paper. The paper features a faint, light-colored sketch of a human face. A white rectangular box is superimposed over the pencil, containing the word "works" in a bold, black, serif font. The background is a soft, out-of-focus grey. A decorative graphic consisting of a thin white line with several semi-transparent white circles is overlaid on the image, curving across the top and right sides.

works



BACON

28 OCTOBER 1909 / 28 APRIL 1992

I BELIEVE IN DEEPLY ORDERED CHAOS.

THE JOB OF THE ARTIST IS ALWAYS TO DEEPEN THE MYSTERY. GREAT ART IS ALWAYS A WAY OF CONCENTRATING, REINVENTING WHAT IS CALLED FACT, WHAT WE KNOW OF OUR EXISTENCE - A RE-CONCENTRATION... TEARING AWAY THE VEILS THAT FACT ACQUIRES THROUGH TIME.

I WOULD LIKE, IN MY ARBITRARY WAY, TO BRING ONE NEARER TO THE ACTUAL HUMAN BEING.

TECHNIQUE MIXTE | 6X4 | 2013



BOWES-LYON

4 AUGUST 1900 / 30 MARCH 2002

*COWARDS FALTER, BUT DANGER IS OFTEN OVERCOME BY THOSE WHO
NOBLY DARE.*

TECHNIQUE MIXTE | 7X5 | 2013



CALLAS

2 DECEMBER 1923 / 16 SEPTEMBER 1977

I DON'T NEED THE MONEY, DEAR. I WORK FOR ART.

YOU ARE BORN AN ARTIST OR YOU ARE NOT. AND YOU STAY AN ARTIST, DEAR, EVEN IF YOUR VOICE IS LESS OF A FIREWORKS. THE ARTIST IS ALWAYS THERE.

WHEN MUSIC FAILS TO AGREE TO THE EAR, TO SOOTHE THE EAR AND THE HEART AND THE SENSES, THEN IT HAS MISSED THE POINT.

TECHNIQUE MIXTE | 4X3 | 2013



CHRISTIE

15 SEPTEMBER 1890 / 12 JANUARY 1976

VERY FEW OF US ARE WHAT WE SEEM.

*THERE'S TOO MUCH TENDENCY TO ATTRIBUTE TO GOD THE EVILS THAT
MAN DOES OF HIS OWN FREE WILL.*

TECHNIQUE MIXTE | 6X4 | 2013



CHURCHILL

30 NOVEMBER 1874 / 24 JANUARY 1965

WE MAKE A LIVING BY WHAT WE GET, BUT WE MAKE A LIFE BY WHAT WE GIVE.

YOU HAVE ENEMIES? GOOD. THAT MEANS YOU'VE STOOD UP FOR SOMETHING, SOMETIME IN YOUR LIFE.

COURAGE IS WHAT IT TAKES TO STAND UP AND SPEAK; COURAGE IS ALSO WHAT IT TAKES TO SIT DOWN AND LISTEN.

TECHNIQUE MIXTE | 6X4 | 2013



EINSTEIN

14 MARCH 1879 / 18 APRIL 1955

IMAGINATION IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN KNOWLEDGE.

REALITY IS MERELY AN ILLUSION, ALBEIT A VERY PERSISTENT ONE.

THE MOST BEAUTIFUL THING WE CAN EXPERIENCE IS THE MYSTERIOUS. IT IS THE SOURCE OF ALL TRUE ART AND ALL SCIENCE. HE TO WHOM THIS EMOTION IS A STRANGER, WHO CAN NO LONGER PAUSE TO WONDER AND STAND RAPT IN AWE, IS AS GOOD AS DEAD : HIS EYES ARE CLOSED.

TECHNIQUE MIXTE | 4X3 | 2013



FREUD

8 DECEMBER 1922 / 20 JULY 2011

THE LONGER YOU LOOK AT AN OBJECT, THE MORE ABSTRACT IT BECOMES, AND, IRONICALLY, THE MORE REAL.

WHAT DO I ASK OF A PAINTING? I ASK IT TO ASTONISH, DISTURB, SEDUCE, CONVINC.

TECHNIQUE MIXTE | 4X3 | 2013





GHANDI

2 OCTOBER 1869 / 30 JANUARY 1948

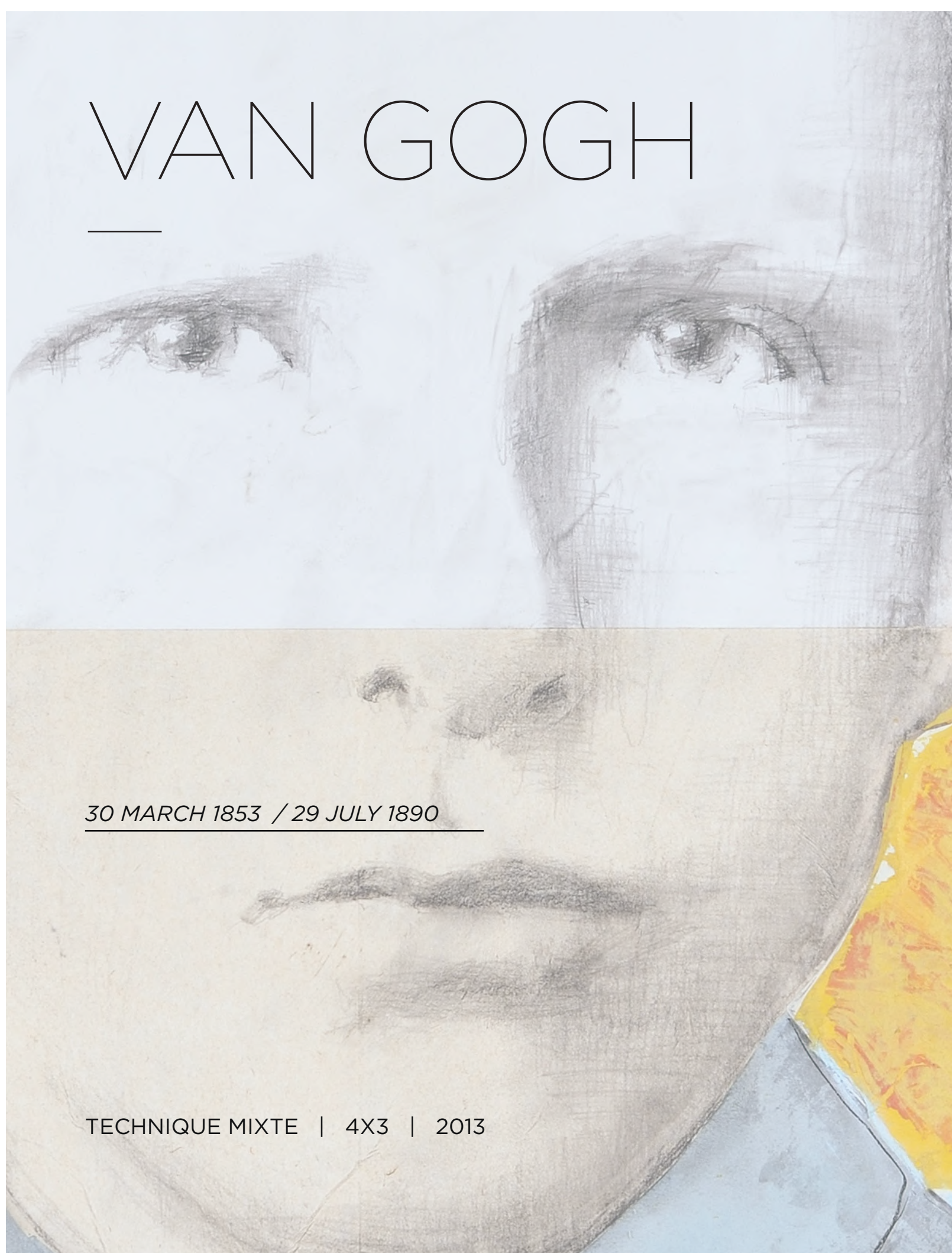
A SMALL BODY OF DETERMINED SPIRITS FIRED BY AN UNQUENCHABLE FAITH IN THEIR MISSION CAN ALTER THE COURSE OF HISTORY.

LIVE AS IF YOU WERE TO DIE TOMORROW. LEARN AS IF YOU WERE TO LIVE FOREVER. YOU MUST BE THE CHANGE YOU WISH TO SEE IN THE WORLD.

TECHNIQUE MIXTE | 7X5 | 2013



VAN GOGH



30 MARCH 1853 / 29 JULY 1890

TECHNIQUE MIXTE | 4X3 | 2013



HAWKING

8 JANUARY 1942

I HAVE NOTICED EVEN PEOPLE WHO CLAIM EVERYTHING IS PREDESTINED, AND THAT WE CAN DO NOTHING TO CHANGE IT, LOOK BEFORE THEY CROSS THE ROAD.

THERE IS NO UNIQUE PICTURE OF REALITY.

SCIENCE IS NOT ONLY A DISCIPLE OF REASON BUT, ALSO, ONE OF ROMANCE AND PASSION.

TECHNIQUE MIXTE | 6X4 | 2013



HITCHCOCK

13 AUGUST 1899 / 29 APRIL 1980

DRAMA IS LIFE WITH THE DULL BITS CUT OUT.

GIVE THEM PLEASURE - THE SAME PLEASURE THEY HAVE WHEN THEY WAKE UP FROM A NIGHTMARE.

IF IT'S A GOOD MOVIE, THE SOUND COULD GO OFF AND THE AUDIENCE WOULD STILL HAVE A PERFECTLY CLEAR IDEA OF WHAT WAS GOING ON.

TECHNIQUE MIXTE | 4X3 | 2013



JOYCE

2 FEBRUARY 1882 / 13 JANUARY 1941

*A MAN OF GENIUS MAKES NO MISTAKES; HIS ERRORS ARE VOLITIONAL
AND ARE THE PORTALS OF DISCOVERY.*

*IRRESPONSIBILITY IS PART OF THE PLEASURE OF ALL ART; IT IS THE
PART THE SCHOOLS CANNOT RECOGNIZE.*

*I'VE PUT IN SO MANY ENIGMAS AND PUZZLES THAT IT WILL KEEP THE
PROFESSORS BUSY FOR CENTURIES ARGUING OVER WHAT I MEANT,
AND THAT'S THE ONLY WAY OF INSURING ONE'S IMMORTALITY.*

TECHNIQUE MIXTE | 4X3 | 2013



KIPLING



30 DECEMBER 1865 / 18 JANUARY 1936

WORDS ARE, OF COURSE, THE MOST POWERFUL DRUG USED BY MANKIND.

WE HAVE FORTY MILLION REASONS FOR FAILURE, BUT NOT A SINGLE EXCUSE.

*A WOMAN'S GUESS IS MUCH MORE ACCURATE THAN A MAN'S CERTAINTY.
HE TRAVELS THE FASTEST WHO TRAVELS ALONE.*

TECHNIQUE MIXTE | 4X3 | 2013



LENNON

9 OCTOBER 1940 / 8 DECEMBER 1980

MY ROLE IN SOCIETY, OR ANY ARTIST'S OR POET'S ROLE, IS TO TRY AND EXPRESS WHAT WE ALL FEEL. NOT TO TELL PEOPLE HOW TO FEEL. NOT AS A PREACHER, NOT AS A LEADER, BUT AS A REFLECTION OF US ALL.

TIME YOU ENJOY WASTING, WAS NOT WASTED.

LIFE IS WHAT HAPPENS WHILE YOU ARE BUSY MAKING OTHER PLANS. I BELIEVE IN GOD, BUT NOT AS ONE THING, NOT AS AN OLD MAN IN THE SKY. I BELIEVE THAT WHAT PEOPLE CALL GOD IS SOMETHING IN ALL OF US. I BELIEVE THAT WHAT JESUS AND MOHAMMED AND BUDDHA AND ALL THE REST SAID WAS RIGHT. IT'S JUST THAT THE TRANSLATIONS HAVE GONE WRONG.

TECHNIQUE MIXTE | 6X4 | 2013



MOORE

30 JULY 1898 / 31 AUGUST 1986

DISCIPLINE IN ART IS A FUNDAMENTAL STRUGGLE TO UNDERSTAND ONESELF, AS MUCH AS TO UNDERSTAND WHAT ONE IS DRAWING.

IT IS A MISTAKE FOR A SCULPTOR OR A PAINTER TO SPEAK OR WRITE VERY OFTEN ABOUT HIS JOB. IT RELEASES TENSION NEEDED FOR HIS WORK.

TO KNOW ONE THING, YOU MUST KNOW THE OPPOSITE. ALL ART IS AN ABSTRACTION TO SOME DEGREE.

TO BE AN ARTIST IS TO BELIEVE IN LIFE.

TECHNIQUE MIXTE | 6X4 | 2013



NIGHTINGALE

12 MAY 1820 / 13 AUGUST 1910

HOW VERY LITTLE CAN BE DONE UNDER THE SPIRIT OF FEAR.

I THINK ONE'S FEELINGS WASTE THEMSELVES IN WORDS; THEY OUGHT ALL TO BE DISTILLED INTO ACTIONS WHICH BRING RESULTS.

TECHNIQUE MIXTE | 6X4 | 2013





PICASSO

TECHNIQUE MIXTE | 7X5 | 2012



PICASSO

25 OCTOBER 1881 / 8 APRIL 1973

*EVERY CHILD IS AN ARTIST. THE PROBLEM IS HOW TO REMAIN AN ARTIST
ONCE WE GROW UP. ART WASHES AWAY FROM THE SOUL THE DUST OF
EVERYDAY LIFE.*

*IT TOOK ME FOUR YEARS TO PAINT LIKE RAPHAEL, BUT A LIFETIME TO
PAINT LIKE A CHILD.*

ART IS A LIE THAT MAKES US REALIZE TRUTH.

TECHNIQUE MIXTE | 7X5 | 2012



SHACKLETON

15 FEBRUARY 1874 / 5 JANUARY 1922

*WE HAD SEEN GOD IN HIS SPLENDORS, HEARD THE TEXT THAT NATURE
RENDERS.*

WE HAD REACHED THE NAKED SOUL OF MAN.

TECHNIQUE MIXTE | 4X3 | 2013



SPENCER

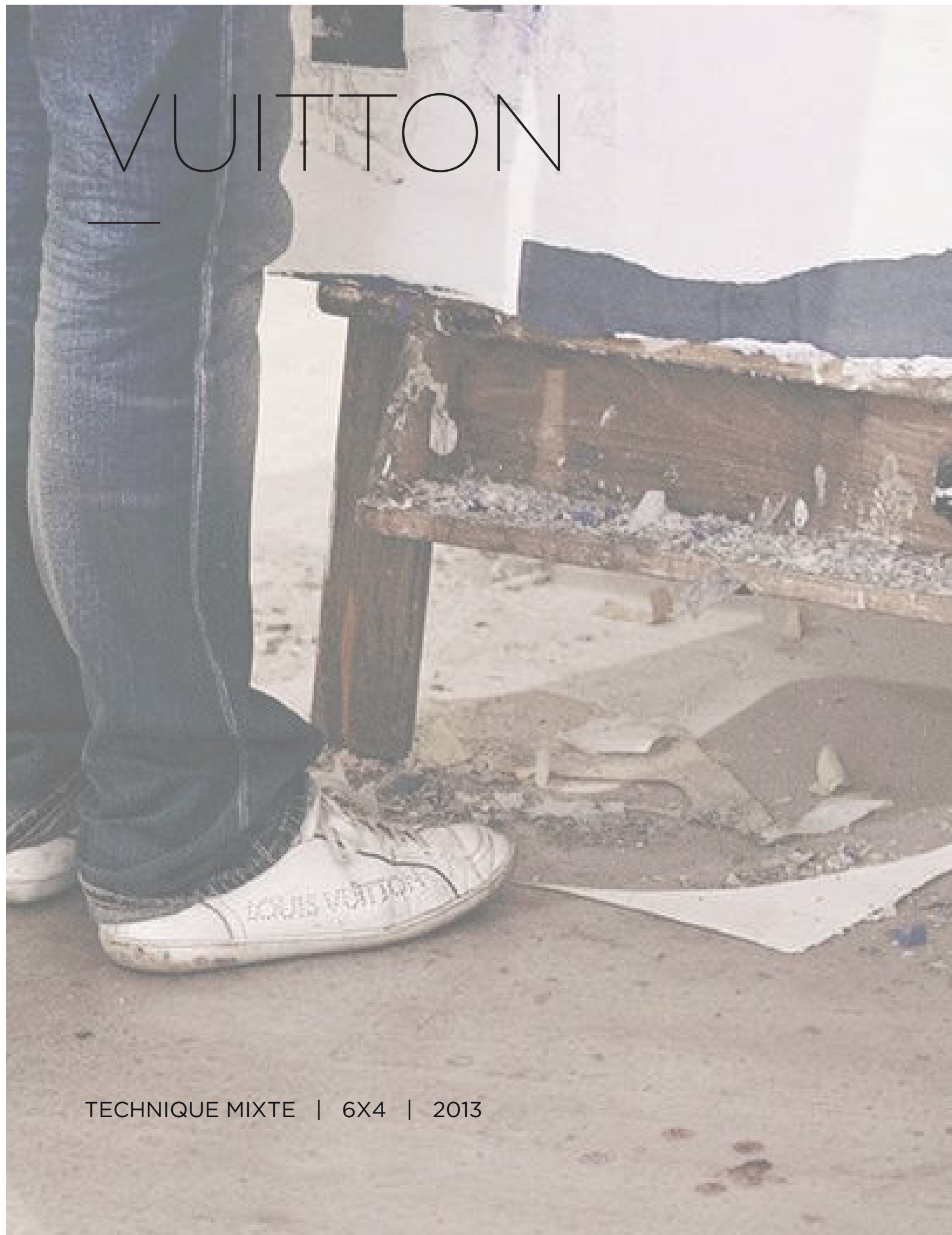
1 JULY 1961 / 31 AUGUST 1997

CARRY OUT A RANDOM ACT OF KINDNESS, WITH NO EXPECTATION OF REWARD, SAFE IN THE KNOWLEDGE THAT ONE DAY SOMEONE MIGHT DO THE SAME FOR YOU.

TECHNIQUE MIXTE | 6X4 | 2013



VUITTON



TECHNIQUE MIXTE | 6X4 | 2013



WILDE

16 OCTOBER 1854 / 30 NOVEMBER 1900

*I AM NOT YOUNG ENOUGH TO KNOW EVERYTHING.
ILLUSION IS THE FIRST OF ALL PLEASURES.
I THINK THAT GOD IN CREATING MAN SOMEWHAT OVERESTIMATED HIS
ABILITY.*

*ART IS THE MOST INTENSE MODE OF INDIVIDUALISM THAT THE WORLD
HAS KNOWN.*

*BEAUTY IS A FORM OF GENIUS - IS HIGHER, INDEED, THAN GENIUS, AS
IT NEEDS NO EXPLANATION. IT IS OF THE GREAT FACTS IN THE WORLD
LIKE SUNLIGHT, OR SPRINGTIME, OR THE REFLECTION IN DARK WATER
OF THAT SILVER SHELL WE CALL THE MOON.*

TECHNIQUE MIXTE | 7X5 | 2013



MAO

26 DECEMBER 1893 / 9 SEPTEMBER 1976

THE PEOPLE, AND THE PEOPLE ALONE, ARE THE MOTIVE FORCE IN THE MAKING OF WORLD HISTORY.

TECHNIQUE MIXTE | 6X4 | 2013



SANYU

14 OCTOBER 1901 / 1966

TECHNIQUE MIXTE | 6X4 | 2013







LOUIS **BOUDREAULT**

BIOGRAPHY

Louis Boudreault was born September 24th, 1956 at Havre-Aubert, Iles de la Madeleine. After his studies in literature and theater, he leaves for France, where he enters the Louvre school in Paris.

Then, he works as an art consultant for 6 years, contributing to the development of important collections. In 1991, he starts to work full time as an artist. In 1998, he comes back in Québec and puts in place his studio in Montréal.

SOLO SHOWS

- 2012 _ Han Art Gallery, Westmount, Québec, Canada
- 2011 _ Galerie Tornabuoni, Paris, France
- 2011 _ Art Beatus, Hong Kong, China
- 2009 _ Galerie de la Grave, Iles de la Madeleine, Québec, Canada
- 2007 _ Han Art Gallery, Westmount, Québec, Canada
- 2007 _ Stewart Hall Art Gallery, Pointe-Claire, Québec, Canada
- 2007 _ Musée de la Mer, Havre Aubert, Iles de la Madeleine, Québec, Canada
- 2007 _ La Maison du Gouverneur, Montréal, Québec, Canada
- 2006 _ Galerie de la Grave, Iles de la Madeleine, Québec, Canada
- 2005 _ Musée de la Mer, Havre Aubert, Iles de la Madeleine, Québec, Canada
- 2005 _ Galerie de la Grave, Iles de la Madeleine, Québec, Canada
- 2004 _ Les Modernes Gallery, Montréal, Québec, Canada
- 2004 _ Galerie de la Grave, Iles de la Madeleine, Québec, Canada
- 2003 _ Les Modernes Gallery, Montréal, Québec, Canada
- 2003 _ Galerie de la Grave, Iles de la Madeleine, Québec, Canada
- 2002 _ Les Modernes Gallery, Montréal, Québec, Canada
- 2002 _ Galerie de la Grave, Iles de la Madeleine, Québec, Canada
- 2001 _ Les Modernes Gallery, Montréal, Québec, Canada
- 2001 _ Galerie de la Grave, Iles de la Madeleine, Québec, Canada
- 2000 _ Les Modernes Gallery, Montréal, Québec, Canada
- 2000 _ Galerie de la Grave, Iles de la Madeleine, Québec, Canada
- 1999 _ Les Modernes Gallery, Montréal, Québec, Canada
- 1999 _ Galerie de la Grave, Iles de la Madeleine, Québec, Canada
- 1998 _ Angela Ho Gallery, New York, USA
- 1998 _ Galerie de la Grave, Iles de la Madeleine, Québec, Canada
- 1997 _ Musée d'Histoire Naturelle, Menton, France
- 1997 _ Galerie de la Grave, Iles de la Madeleine, Québec, Canada



SOLO SHOWS

- 1997 _ Musée d'Histoire Naturelle, Menton, France
- 1996 _ Grand Marché d'Art Contemporain, Boulogne, France
- 1996 _ Galerie de la Grave, Iles de la Madeleine, Québec, Canada
- 1996 _ Musée d'Histoire Naturelle, Menton, France
- 1996 _ Musée d'Histoire Naturelle, Paris, France
- 1995 _ Galerie de la Grave, Iles de la Madeleine, Québec, Canada
- 1994 _ Galerie de la Grave, Iles de la Madeleine, Québec, Canada
- 1994 _ Musée du Havre Aubert, Iles de la Madeleine, Québec, Canada
- 1993 _ Galerie de la Grave, Iles de la Madeleine, Québec, Canada

GROUP SHOWS

- 2011 _ Foire Internationale d'art contemporain (FIAC), Paris, France
- 2011 _ Hong Kong International Art Fair, Hong Kong, China
- 2010 _ Toronto International Art Fair, Ontario, Canada
- 2009 _ Toronto International Art Fair, Ontario, Canada
- 2008 _ Toronto International Art Fair, Ontario, Canada
- 2007 _ Toronto International Art Fair, Ontario, Canada
- 2007 _ Toronto Affordable Art Fair at the Armory, Ontario, Canada
- 2004 _ Toronto International Art Fair, Ontario, Canada
- 2003 _ Art New York, USA
- 2003 _ Art Miami, USA
- 2002 _ Toronto International Art Fair, Ontario, Canada
- 2002 _ Art Miami, USA
- 2001 _ Toronto International Art Fair, Ontario, Canada
- 2001 _ Les Modernes Gallery, Montréal, Québec, Canada
- 2000 _ L'Annexe Gallery, Les Modernes, Montréal, Québec, Canada
- 1999 _ Art Symposium, Iles de la Madeleine, Québec, Canada
- 1999 _ Ovazione, Torino, Italy
- 1998 _ Les Ullis, 5th Fine Arts Forum, Ile de France L'objet recréé
- 1997 _ Contemporary Art Biennale, Florence, Italy
- 1993 _ Art Asia, Hong Kong
- 1993 _ Art Asia, Singapore