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## ART: People And Places

By AMAURY SAINT-GILLES

Regular readers of this column know that I'm not overly enthusiastic about exhibitions of foreign art shown in Japan. There are several reasons but prime amongst them has to be that, for the most part, these "select" shows are anything but. They are typically curated by a self-acknowledged Japanese expert who knows exactly what the Japanese public would love to see and thus proceeds to give that to them in whopping dosages. I have seen far too many such collections to be easily enticed to cover another, but here I am doing just that! The show is the remaindered retrospective displayed under the title "Biennale de Paris '59-'73." It is being held in Seibu Ikebukuro's 12th-floor Art Museum. The show will last through Mar. 29 (note the store is closed each Thursday and there is an entry fee of 600 yen or less).

The collection is fairly well representative of the many art movements that have surfaced in the years covered. Naturally enough, whoever curated the show kept space limitations in

mind and chose only those works which have been proved valuable by the enduring success of their originator. It would have been a better, more even show had the selection been more typically representative of the works originally presented en masse. Sure it is nice to see what X was doing in 1961 and Y was creating in 1965, but how much more so would the show have been illuminating with works of "real" contemporaries that were originally hung in the Biennale side-by-side with present-day successes. Beggars and horses....

Don't judge the show on the basis of glancing at the catalog (if you should find one in easy reach). The catalog is outrageously priced and erroneous because several of the pieces pictured have not been included for one reason or another. Several that have been printed up have strange shooting angles which give them unrealistic viewing points when compared to actual installations. Color is also not a high point getter when it comes to accuracy in the album.

Some of the pieces are pure unadulterated trash. One of them indeed is plasticized garbage entitled "Remnants of the Bourgeoisie" or some such nontitle. One must look past quite a bit to see the wonders for which going to the display is worth the effort. Ikebukuro is located on the JNR Yamanote Loop Line and is four stations north of Shinjuku.

One of the more substantial and interesting sculptural pieces has to be the 1969 stabile by Anthony Caro. The rosy-brick ironwork sprawls contentedly in an open space quite near the entrance. Resting on three legs and its abdomen, the work seems to be readying for movement. Caro is a master at simple statement using concrete images and this early work is a good example of that finesse.

Since 1973 was nominally supposed to be the cutoff date, one wonders about the Helen Frankenthaler oil or acrylic in red and green which was credited as having been executed in 1976. Probably a little in-town pressure from Fuji TV where H.F. is having a show of her works soon (Fuji Television Gallery that is!). Whenever it was done, it painted circles around the Hisao Domoto piece dating from 1960. That work — 1960/Z — looks too much like a jazzed-up nihonga of indeterminate imagery and like quality.

The Rauschenburg is likewise weak but situated almost atop the Yves Klein Rorschach nudes; it is nearly invisible. Tingly allows the viewer to partake in creating original works in tandem with his own genius for mechanization. His Rube Goldberg machine clasps a marker in its grip and mindlessly scribbles repeatedly in the same general manner over an inserted card. The machine at rest is hardly understandable, and why it need



Yves Klein's painted and blotted nudes are much better in their original blue hues on a mottled blue background.

be primed by a viewer's 500 yen is a good question for Seibu directors to ponder?

An early (1962) Jasper Johns in subtle beige and blues is a delight to see. Especially when one compares the soft blending he employed then with the harder-edged and strident-toned works of more recent vintage.

Oyvind Fahlstrom via a 1961 work and my own knowledge of recenter pieces shows his lack of progress in a style that lacks even that.

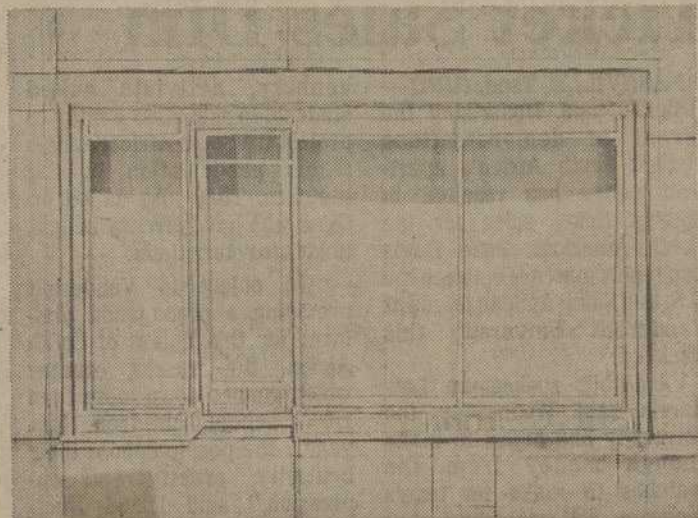
All the publicity given the massive art works of Christo sort of dwarfs the pieces he was forced to deal with or in during the early part of his career. This show has a 1964 work called "Storefront" which is a miniature realization of a draped store window. The trademark of Christ is his

wrapping/draping and this work is no exception. A good comparison piece when put up against the running fence in California or Australia's draped seaside cliffs.

Sado-masochistic Allen Jones is well-loved here in one of the world's S+M bastions and his "Table" is sure to be a rave piece for all fetishists. Peter Staempfli's stylized realism — a close-up of a car wheel and well — is a 1969 work which foreshadowed super-realism.

The best of the show is most certainly Bernard Venet's industrial piece — heavily lacquered cardboard in deep maroon and red. A marvelous tongue-in-cheek that is eloquent and delicious at the same time.

Almost two viewing weeks left to find time for Seibu and the Paris Biennale. It is worth seeing despite....



A construction in pink recreates a real storefront for this early Christo piece — his trademark draping/wrapping of known objects/views causes the onlooker to reconsider and look again.

高松 次郎「遠近法のテール」(一九六七)



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## 「時代の証言—パリ・ビエンナーレ59—73」を見て

二つのアンソロジー

現在のパリ・ビエンナーレ展代表のジョルジュ・ブタイユが、そのカタログに、「この展覧会は二つのアンソロジー(同義語)である。それは花束である。とはいえず、それは構成の一基である日本の生花のようには調和がとれていて象徴的な花束ではない。それは今日の芸術のイメージとして、座主の成り立ちを、歴史の中心に置き、思いもかけない香りを備

えたものであったからとかが、その特質といえは、発祥地であるところ(いち)に、なによりも時代に先行している早く情報として世界に影響を及ぼした」と書いている。

時代に先行しているかどうかは、私には疑問があるし、それがなによりも特質というものは思い上がりすぎるとおもいますが、密生した茂みをもつ花束で、判家もあるが、時代の二つの証言であることは確かである。

日本人の作品は細細

クリスト、デイングレイ、セギ、ライリー、クライン、ホックニー、ビストレットなどにも日本人では佐藤卓二、高松次郎、工藤智己、室本尚郎、横倉康二などの作品が紹介されている。作品についてのこまかい感想を記す余裕はないが、これらの、思い切ったオリシナルな作品の茂みのなかで、日本人作家の作品が、互にオリシナルでありながらも、やはり日本人の感覚的なとおもわれる繊細さという清涼感というか、日本の花らしい共通の体質を感じるのが興味をわかせた。

組織者の熱意と創意

それは別として、全体の作品を一通り見たあとで感じる感想は、よくもここまでやったという感じと同時に、冒頭に書いたように、「現代美術」ここからどこへというカタログのサブタイトルが大いに象徴的な意味にみえてくるのが結論であった。それだけに、この展覧会の今後の組織者の熱意と創意にたいしては敬意を表すべきであろう。

(美術評論家・橋村 豊子代) ◇「時代の証言—パリ・ビエンナーレ59—73」展 3月29日 開き、思いもかけない香りを備