

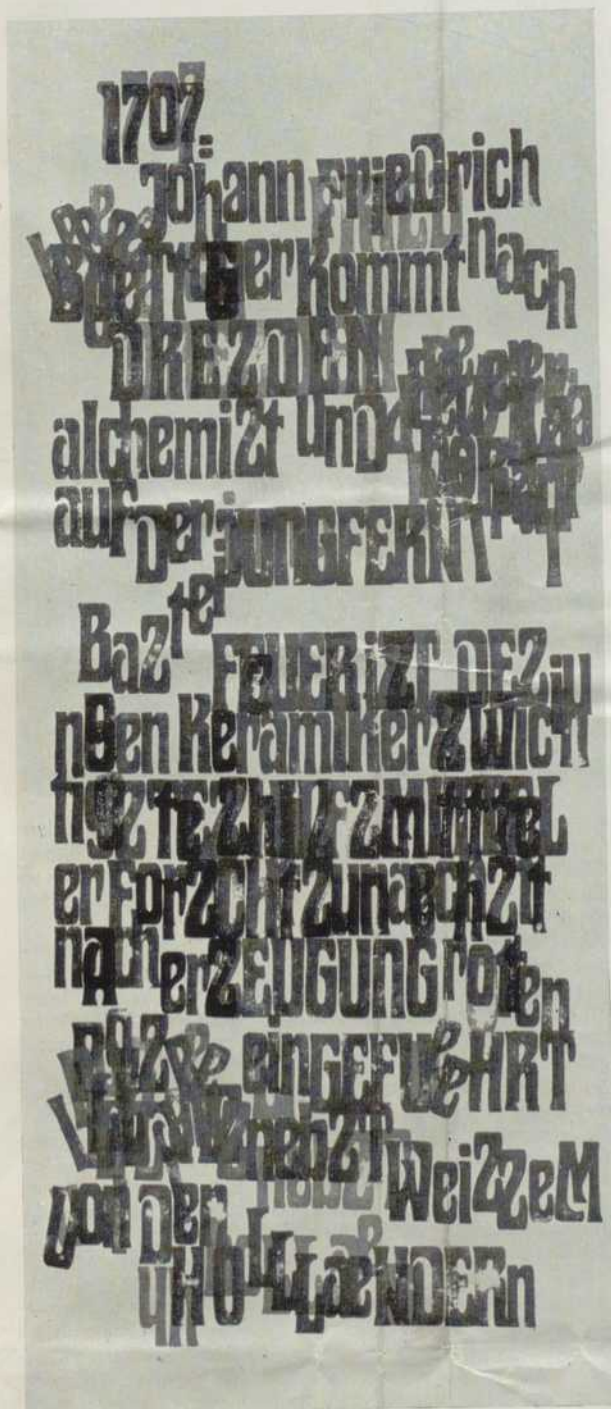
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## Young Art in Paris

Biennale de jeunesse reviewed by G. S. Whittet



JOSUA REICHERT, Germany:  
TEXT SUR L'HISTOIRE DE LA PORCELAINE I, 1961. Print  
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Modern art, generally speaking, is a young man's art. Braque and Picasso were not yet thirty when they launched Cubism as the first major breakthrough in anti-Renaissance picture conception. So that the age limit of thirty-five imposed on exhibitors at the Biennale de Paris should ensure that any new movements are caught literally 'in the bud'. But are they?

The third manifestation of this ever-increasing anthology opened on 28 September last in the exhausting setting of the Musée d'Art Moderne of the City of Paris. Monsieur Raymond Cogniat, Principal Inspector of the Fine Arts and the indefatigable originator of the event, announces proudly in the preface to the catalogue that now more than sixty countries participate. Which is a pity. This is to perpetuate the belief that every country represented is a comparable unit as far as regards production of works of art. Nothing, of course, could be further from the truth. It is surprising, however, that so little of the bad art comes from the most backward countries artistically.

Japan, for instance, could hardly be expected to provide the musical boxes of Tetsumi Kudo in the tradition of its past. These ready-made and oddly disquieting objects housed in cupboards that burst into recorded pop songs as one of their doors is opened are the trick inventions of a side show on a seaside pier. To call them examples of Japanese art is beside the point. Junzo Watanabe in alleviation paints large informal oils with a fine contrast between the flat and the relief.

France as the host nation contributes the largest number of exhibits. Of those the 'travaux d'équipe', launched so successfully in the second Biennale, on this occasion, too, have an exciting impact, proving that a synthesis of the arts is far and away the most urgent necessity for stabilizing and encouraging the serious work of creative visual imagery. Le Groupe de Recherche d'Art Visuel, whose works confront the visitor in the entrance hall of the exhibition, are primarily concerned with engaging the participation of the spectator in various situations. Greatest and most immediate of these is the mobile that hangs on the wall facing the door. Composed of hundreds of squares of aluminium suspended by nylon threads, it measured 21 metres wide by seven in depth. Its pulsating ripples on the wall was to produce the desired 'activation visuelle' which was in action even when one turned away and saw the mobile screen reflected in the glass of the windows. Another creation of endless facets was the structure of plexiglass coloured but transparent. Moving around this tower of light, the planes supplied a multiplicity of forms, juxtaposed and superimposed in a dynamic effect on the eye. The spectator was ingeniously involved also in the sphere, 2½ metres in diameter, formed by the intercrossing of aluminium tubes on perpendicular frames. Looking into this sphere was to find endlessly permutable patterns conveyed in the perspective.

Le Groupe Mu, consisting of a musician, two architects, three painters, a sculptor and an engraver presented *Finis Terrae*, described as a zoomorphic mutation. In form resembling a symmetrical fishnet it showed, in maquette, how art is on its way out of the salon into space for its setting.

In fact, the Biennale tends to show, if anything, the decline in painting as the chief means of artistic expression. Walking alongside these walls of painted canvases is to come to the reluctant conclusion that two dimensions are not enough. Reconstruction of a visual sensation is scarcely adequate; for this reason in the U.S.S.R. section, the portrait of Lenin,