

*Mary-u-wanna*

Florian & Michaël Quistrebert

June 12 - July 31, 2010

After a one year residence in New York City in 2009 (Triangle Studio, Culturesfrance), the work of the Quistrebert brothers, breaking with the narrative process, evolved to an ambiguous and oracular abstraction, along with a fascination for Gotham (Gothic America) architecture and ornamentation. According to them, it is a style « that dares formal mixes, combining gothic vertical impetuses and constructivist cuttings, medieval austerity and futuristic megalomania.» The artists, more than working inside a specific style, wish to «mistreat, to pervert it», in a post-modern version of romanticism (given the hypothesis that the conceptual absolute of the 90's was modernist). The last paintings result in «the place of a dilemma delivered to the present era: are we here on the side of idealisation of nostalgic symbols or on the one of distant incarnation of disintegration and rotting of things?» (Alexis Vaillant) Thus taking inspiration from early XXth century American artists and specifically from Lyonel Feininger (who the French critic Yves Brochard considers as the incarnation of «unity and spiritual base of arts in a mystical atmosphere»), they choose to mix avant-gard and darkness. They superimpose layers of paintings, borrowing to the method of collage, but also to appropriation or geometrical forms connection.

Their recent videos are moving versions of their geometric paintings, they remind of the avant-garde films of Lazlo Moholy-Nagy and Hans Richter which use of an infinite combination of geometric forms. They are made of shadows shot on a sheet with a digital camera. More present in their work today, their videos are meant to be «a rolled up version of the futurism, a poor psychedelism, only black, white and grey».

Using those poor medias, paint spray or low-tech video, Florian and Michaël Quistrebert deal with degeneration of utopias, and move on from the mystical and idealistic visions of the major abstract painters. For Moholy-Nagy, abstract art planned to create «a desirable futur order». Mondrian saw in painting a model of universal harmony and genuine beauty, and thought that man, during his development, would replace it with an environment where he would live in harmony. Kandinsky fixed a deep relationship between art and society, in a very religious issue. Referring to suprematism, Malévitch wrote : «our art world brings the new, the non-objective, the pure.» And the October 1917 Revolution develops the conditions of Russian avant-garde since the artists join the idea that a revolutionary art was a necessary component to the social and political revolutions. Until the artists became a threat to the Revolution that finally suffocated by its own undertaking.

Therefore the religious aspect of the work is an lure. It needs to be observed with a global mystical overview. About this mediumnic abstraction, the artists prefer speaking of «psychic», «of the mind».

Florian & Michaël Quistrebert live and work in Paris. Their last solo shows were in Domaine départemental de Chamarrande (*Ex Futuro*), in New York (*Brothers of the Shadow*, Envoy Enterprise) and in Nantes (*The Eighth Sphere*, Zoo Galerie). They were part of several group shows including *NineteenEightyFour* (Austrian Cultural Forum, New York), *Là-bas* (Galerie Crèvecoeur) and *I'm so Sad my God* (ISCP, New York).