

Turlututu Chapeau Pointu

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Turlututu, tralalala, tralalalère, tradériré, zim zoum zoum, go the onomatopoeias in the Chapeau pointu (pointed hat) old rhyme. Alongside *Dansons la Capucine* and *Frère Jacques*, it is the most emblematic children's song we have left from the vast musical and poetic production of the goguettes. These refrains are more or less serious, often mischievous, sometimes political, and all the more so during tense or revolutionary periods. There were Bonapartist goguette songs, but more importantly, *goguettiers* gave us the famous revolutionary songs *L'Internationale* and *Le Temps des Cerises*.

These "singing societies" existed by the thousands, especially in the 19th century, and constituted, in a way, the alternative but highly popular scene of the time. Their primary purpose was to have fun, with good food and music as the main means. The *goguettiers* themselves seemed to be carried away by their love of music and play without taking the products of their evenings too seriously.

Some goguettes were made up of well-known male poets, others, more rarely, of women designated as "poètes ouvrières" (working-class poets), which now seems like a minimization of their work, an excuse almost, asking in the very prefaces to the published collections for an indulgence for the work, which could not be other than modest, since it came from women and the working class.

"It is a dull commonplace in each country to contrast the banality of official art with the truly ethnic character of popular productions. (...) One smiles that a parochial nationalism tends nowadays to exaggerate the ethnic value of touching poverty. (...) In statutory and imagery, popular art seeks only to move; in minor arts, it only aims to adorn. It thus ends where art begins. There is no art without strongly asserted individuality in the artist (...) But it is not forbidden to prefer gentian to roses. Every masterpiece contains a cry of pride: the affirmation of a man. This anonymous art, close to the ground, brings us back to the modesty of origins," wrote Marguerite Yourcenar (*L'improvisation sur Innsbruck*, 1929).

Here, we will allow ourselves to find her too categorical, and bring together works that we feel tend to transcend these distinctions. Works which, through the apparent frivolity of their subject or their rudimentary techniques - their fragility, but also their profusion, their formal generosity, sometimes their mysticism - certainly recall the attributes of the so-called "popular" arts, without this ever preventing the singularity of their authors from shining through and their individuality from "strongly asserting itself".