

## Spectres

### Gauthier/Audet/Lagrange Paquet

January 19<sup>th</sup>–March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2017

## MOLIMAGINING

To think is, perhaps, to imagine. Let's imagine, then, that Guido Molinari (GM) one day imagined that an artist—here, Jean-Pierre Gauthier (JPG)—turned back to face him. Not just toward his corpus, but *toward him*. To make quite something else of him.

The success of this turn depends on one condition: a *savoir-voir*. A *seeing* that *knows* what's at play in the work of GM and what in it—even if unconsciously—calls to us. This is JPG's premise; it presumes our familiarity with the works of GM and, particularly, with what is most emblematic in it: his use of the line. We might call it the "trajectory" (out and back, forward and back, fold and unfolding, broken and taken up again, etc.). We could also call this line the *GM-world*: the line/trajectory of the world's very existence. *Savoir-voir* would then mean adjusting ourselves (but how?) to the demands of a thread that GM himself did not use lightly. To our *savoir* we need to add, thus, a feeling of empathy.

Though it may seem strange, I'm not really surprised that GM serves as a motif for JPG. Many GM paintings could indeed have been painted by machines, as their logic seems in harmony, to the point of being overdetermined, as if they unconsciously knew of the eventual presence of machines here. The placement of JPG's machines is nonetheless arresting, when the artist installs them before the blotches of colour on the walls of GM's studio, or places them in front of the paintings that predate the very emblem already mentioned.

It is as if the machines, somehow, in terms of the "oeuvre" of GM, face minor objects. To conclude that JPG prefers the surroundings to the "oeuvre" of GM would be a mistake, however, and would miss what is exemplary in the *savoir-voir* of his position: here there's no disjunction, no separation between entities. But how can we reconstitute their braiding?

I mean to say . . . No, what I'm sensing is too dreamy to be simply said: my image is of JPG, looking at these gobs of colour, impregnating himself with GM in his non-place of disorder *and* order, studio *and* painting, drawing *and* colour, random blotch *and* rigorous grasp of painting, the beat—systole *and* diastole—of heart *and* mind. So I'll just say that, from JPG to GM-world, a path is traced. Imbued with a desire to go "not only toward his corpus, but toward him," JPG nonetheless vacillates, I note, in the face of the image of what's at play in this face-to-face detonated mirroring. How can a *savoir-voir* exist, without acceding to, or at least approaching this? How to follow the thread of this line?

From this impregnation, we can glimpse the intuitive hypothesis of JPG's approach to what beckons him. What if, rather than going from GM's blotches or studio to the lines, we tried to reconstitute the braid of "mirrored blotches/lines" (or of what GM's emblematic line holds as residue vis-à-vis what preceded it), might we then generate, if not lines, then at least the dreamy burst of their encounter?

Having recognized the machine-seed at the heart of GM's painting, the challenge for JPG was to attune one machine to another, his to GM's, and "attune" is an apt way to put it. The result of the tuning is, in effect, what GM had sought when he first paired his spectrum of colours: a harmony. But how to bring the ghost (another way

to say spectr... of such a tuning to life?  
By fusing thread, line and trajectory. It's a  
question of braiding, and of empathy.

Speed, acceleration, jumpiness,  
transience, precarity, surface. JPG's  
turn toward GM = a *savoir-voir* of how  
to incarnate the image of GM in our own  
sensitivity, or: to our *savoir-voir*, how  
can we add a *savoir-voir-speed* that is  
jumpy, transient, precarious, in the image  
of our world, burst and grafted onto his  
machines? It's a question of vision, really.  
JPG's machines see and reconstitute what  
they are programmed to do. It matters little  
that their lines are bursting live on-screen,  
whereas those of GM are still, if we don't  
grasp that going *toward* GM and *being*  
JPG is one and the same line, of which  
the burst of the works is the crazy and  
marvellous connivance? Think about it;  
the elder traces his line there where the  
younger invents machines to do the same  
thing. Their art returns us to infancy, that  
of art: the serious creation of its rules and,  
further, the means of dis/playing them.  
Grasping hold of its thread of *savoir-voir*!  
And imagining that, one day, others will  
turn toward us, too, in return.

— Michel Bricault  
[Translated by Erin Moure]

Here is an exhibition which, after that of  
the Italian sculptor Andrea Sala and of the  
Manon De Pauw / Sara A. Tremblay duo,  
emanates from a third residency at the  
Foundation. Upon writing these words, we  
sense that this installation will confirm the  
fact that for any artist who is available in  
the slightest, the cohabitation with the  
works of Molinari, in the space that was  
his during the last period of his life, is  
undeniably beneficial: everything ensues  
as if the aura of the old master of  
chromatic abstraction had resumed to  
float more vividly in his picturesque studio.

This time, the Foundation has invited  
multidisciplinary artist Jean-Pierre  
Gauthier, a master among the most prized  
of his generation, to create in situ new  
mechanical systems—a discipline in which  
he has excelled for over twenty years—  
which will generate images and sounds  
from the pieces and from Molinari's studio,  
and will propose fresh perspectives upon  
this whole adventure. All this, of course,  
while remaining deeply loyal to his own  
vision.

For good measure, Gauthier has joined  
forces with two emerging artists in media  
arts, Pascal Audet and Emmanuel  
Lagrange Paquet—both prodigies like  
him—who are closely familiar with his  
exploration. In only a few days, the  
sumptuous ground floor of the Foundation  
has reverted to the mayhem of the golden  
years of Molinari. I think that Guido would  
have appreciated the presence in his bank  
of these three “mad scientists” with their  
robots and their screens... G.D.