

Untitled postface for
Georges Meurant: Dynamic Gaps
By Jean Guiraud

Didier Devillez Editeur, Brussels 2000 ¹

In a book on Meurant's work I said: "*What matters is not what the painter does but how his paintings function after he has finished with them. They either remain what they are, a mere product, or they trigger their own activity and become works of art*". A painting by Meurant does exactly that: its endless permutations invite us, call on us, to see the work doing what it does.

Amazingly, this work appears to be, and indeed is, strictly controlled by the artist, shape after shape, colour after colour, it is the most intentional, concerted work possible, yet it proves to be entirely free in the way it appears to us. A real miracle is happening here, and one that enlightens us about the nature of art.

Art is an activity (and not a language, as has been too often claimed). But it is a an activity that addresses our perception, is intended to be perceived (seen, heard or felt) and hence to interact with us. That is the crux of the matter. Interaction concerns the senses, the body's response, something essentially biological and therefore unconscious, something that takes place within us but somehow without us. So much so, that painting is probably less a matter of placement of material than of provoking or triggering something. Meurant demonstrates this in masterly fashion and as no one has done before, by playing on every factor, every mode and every degree of contrast that determine colour's vitality.

Painting, he seems to tell us, does not show us something : rather it makes us see what it is doing, perceive its own activity, which may be feverish as in his case or more subtle as with some other artists. We could have seen this, we should have seen it, in the great works that have come down to us from the past. It is in any case something that it is impossible not to see in his work. To my mind this is crucial both for painting and for aesthetics in general.

¹ Published on the "Georges Meurant Page" of the Society for Gestalt Theory with kind permission of Antoinette Guiraud Collin, widow of Jean Guiraud. © Antoinette Guiraud Collin 2012