

Thomas Andréa Barbey - *Nil Novi Sub Sole*

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“Traveler ? Those that go around the world can make the conversation last a quarter more”.

We all know this famous quote by Jules Renard in his diary : a pointed irony that echoes the low cost plane ticket that can now carry us everywhere, elsewhere and easy easy. To that, we call the poet Henri Michaux for support : “By going around the earth, we end up knowing why we live”. Thomas Andrea Barbey would agree on this. Nothing is more forsaken or trivial than this lost time that irrigates his drawings everywhere. put

He admits “like a traveler must be able to slip from the blade of grass to the cosmos, I spend my time on adventures, for a walk in some place, between the world as I see it and the world as I imagine it. My artistic work is finally born from a naturalist reverie.” Who thenboasts of naturalism ? This thing is not so well seen nowadays : art fights, denounces, it acts, it pools crisis and calls for planetary inequity.

But to look at a puddle, to watch the sky brighten, or even to preoccupy oneself with a furrow of sand at the ebb of the tides, the obtuse mass of a rock and the plenitude of a slack sea ? Many topics that one would call off-topic. Who knows, though, if all of this does not have an immense worth for this stubborn artist - who, for a long time, worked for the landscape and urban planning agency TAKTYK - displaying his stubborn resistance in a time that exults speed and its effects, tracts new idea every second and swells with saving virtues as one breathes ?

Thomas Andrea Barbey’s air in his Trouville-sur-Mer studio seems, on the contrary, to want to be set back from the famous maelstrom : far, far away from our unstoppable stream of images and times compiled from the global village. He clings, one would say, to his topos like a lazy little periwinkle to his rock : absent from tumults, his art is combined with the meticulous description, by the simple alliance of chinese ink and paper, to the pallor of a sky, to the moving shapes of fine drifting clouds or ripples of water. Zen swoon and metaphysics of the viewer, thus Thomas Andrea Barbey travels. A world tour whose design and the slowness of time become a trace and an entire project.

Laurent Boudier.