

Jacques Imbert. *Les Fils conducteurs*. Remoullins : Brémond, 2000. 93 pages. 150 FF. ISBN 2-910063-54-2.



book of discreet revelation and self-deployment, *Les Fils conducteurs* speaks, as does for example « Le temps que perd la mort », of earth and dream, of love and hurt, of desire and loss, of continuity or simple residue. It is, of course, too, a book of beginnings and openings, but then complicated by memory and maturity, knowledge and the felt power of time. Texts may vary considerably in their pitch and mode : if all is prose, length is utterly inconstant; narrative clarity can mingle with allegory and rich metaphor or can dip into the oneiric or the meditative; smooth, fluid syntax can suddenly dissolve into staccato rhythm, fragmentation, ellipses both formal and ideational; « Où le cou se repose », with its teeming cultural and temporal specificities, can yield to that barely composed self-exposure of « L'Ombre du cœur » : « Il n'a plus le bruit alterné des feuilles, sa part de murmures. Il désespère un peu »; a terrible and flagrantly avowed sense of the self's "monstrous[ness] and buried[ness]" can, though with rarity, give way to glimpses of the implicitly swarming options in human exchange and in language.

For the most part, however, this is a book of sobriety and bare continuity, of minimal impetus and "urgency". Or, put better, the latter power, channelled into the poetic, cannot raise language to the level of song or hymn. At best it can speak of existence as an experience of lack that only desire realised might raise to a stage of self-transformation permitting poetry's own exultation in itself.

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Pierre Oster. *Paysage du Tout*. Paris : Gallimard, Collection Poésie, 2000. 311 pages. ISBN 2-07-041146-X.



he writing of Pierre Oster goes back some considerable time and the present volume, no doubt something of a revelation nevertheless for many readers, offers samplings of the full range of his œuvre, from 1951 to 2000. A revelation because, although Oster's earlier work appeared with Gallimard (*Le champ de mai* [1955] and *Solitude de la lumière* [1957] down to *Les dieux* [1970]), all of his subsequent books have been associated with smaller presses such as Babel, Obsidiane or L'Alphée; but a revelation, too, because of the intense lyricism — « L'adéquation de l'esprit au réel est d'abord lyrique », he