

Christophe Lamiot. *Sitôt Elke*. Paris: Flammarion, 2003. 213 pages. 18,50 euros. ISBN 2-08-068435-3.

Here is a collection with a distinctive voice, subtly varying manners, yet a global constancy that shows that we are much beyond experimentation, that strength and authenticity have been achieved. Christophe Lamiot's *Sitôt Elke* offers poems that are situated, circumstantial, journal-like texts formally, aesthetically caressed, but, too, meditated to lift them above the ephemeral, quotidian experience in which they yet firmly are embedded. Simplicity and aeration mark these poetic articulations of the lived, yet so do a studiedness, a compositional care, simultaneously prosodic and visual. In this, *Sitôt Elke* bonds with long poetic traditions, going much beyond the modernist turns of, say, Mallarmé, Apollinaire, Reverdy, but also in touch with contemporary gestures of poets such as Réda, Leclair, Pinson. The *illusion* evoked by the volume's subtitle is thus, in part, a reminder of a deep aesthetic creativity at work in the midst of these quietly intense and impressionistic jottings drawn from quotidian life, colloquia in USA or France, etc. For these poetic suites, now compact, now more full-winded, ever modifying their mathematical and visual deployment, generate a powerful yet discreet "illusory" charm, no doubt ontological as well as aesthetic. Indeed, if there is "illusion", it may be said to extend to a certain atmosphere, essentially elegiacal, hovering over the *ontos* of poetic experience as Lamiot has lived it. Dreamy yet concrete, sensual yet secret, autobiographical yet quite beyond any banal *ressassement* of self, the poems of *Sitôt Elke* plunge us into the strange, ordinary, barely tangible beauties and microfascinations that inform life. In this, though real, intuitable, they too, like the poetic forms that contain them, are tinged with an air of illusion as the mind negotiates memory and turns it into the music of verse or of prose.

A fine, intricate distillation of authentic experience, knowing its limits yet defying them....

Christian Hubin. *Le sens des perdants*. Paris: Corti, 2002. 207 pages. 16 euros. ISBN 2-7143-0789-2.

Since *Personne* (1986) and *La Forêt en fragments* (1987), Christian Hubin's work has appeared with great regularity. Poetry, journal notes, readings, reflections, microstudies, books such as this, *Le*

sens des perdants, or *Ce qui est* (1995): all is grist to Hubin's "poesophical", "philopoetic" (as Jean-Claude Pinson might write) mode. Clarity and cogency vie with ellipsis and a certain gnomicness that comes from dense and brief articulation in the tradition of Charian *art bref* and its consequent apophthegmatic or, simply, notational manners, esoteric or plain. Hubin can quote and discuss Delteil and Mandiargues, Nerval and Novalis, Eliot and P. Wateau, Munier and Bachelard, E. Dickinson and Chappuis, Bonnefoy and Daumal, Garelli and Bataille, Daive and Juarroz. The range is dizzying. And then there is music, postmodernism, Vermeer, Rothko, and the endlessly resurgent issue of poetry that haunts the mind of French poets as a generic problematic barely touching the minds of many who write and read it in other parts of the world. And, in addition, our mind's eye is invited to flit from Prague to the Morbihan, from Beaune to Rocroi, from New York to Eymoutiers. There are, in *Le sens des perdants* – a title that reveals a certain preoccupation, less, as Hubin says, with *l'inadmissible* than with the dystopic, the melancholic – many enthusiasms and appreciations. If they tend, like raw experience itself, to be problematised, it is not out of perversity but due to a radically felt dialecticisation of the meaning of human aspirations and hopes, gestures and achievements. Ultimately, poetry, with its others, is a song of being, beyond having, of a doing whose logic is withdrawn within its own parameters.

There is a great deal of food for thought in *Le sens des perdants*, but, as the English say, don't believe everything you read in the papers – any more than Hubin himself.

Françoise Hân. *Ne pensant à rien.* Remoulins sur Gardon: Jacques Brémont, 2002. 47 pages. ISBN 2-910063-81-X.



n exquisitely produced book by a poet who has recently offered us *Une fête même au creux du sombre* (1997, Rougerie) and *L'évolution des paysages* (2000, Cadex) and whose work goes back as far as 1956 with *Cité des hommes* (Seghers)... And beautifully interlaced with the *encres* of Jean-Michel Marchetti.

The title, of course, is taken *à rebours* – it comes from Michaux- for this elegant, slim collection is anything but an unthinking jumble of signs. Any sorrow that may arise, any sense of alienation in the midst of the world's powerfully contrastive structure, is here taken as a point of departure, a springboard allowing for some perhaps improbable – Françoise Hân