

et de l'immobilité de Douve, c'est, oui, un sentiment de dérive et de chaos, mais aussi le sentiment d'une non-coïncidence entre la violence apparemment psychique ainsi théâtralisée et ces impressions de "lumière" et de "beauté" jusqu'ici consciemment vécues. Y aurait-il quelque chose dans le langage, la prise de possession qu'elle opérait dans *Traité* — et qu'on autorisait — qui "v[oudrait] la désagrégation, le renoncement"? Se trouve menacée, dans *Traité*, "cette intuition d'unité" que Bonnefoy, depuis, n'a jamais cessé de caresser.

Le choc subi fournit pourtant, et tout de suite, l'occasion de repartir, de s'assumer, de prendre sur soi cette tâche qui consiste à "dissiper ce vertige, [à] séparer dans les mots ombre et lumière, [à] convaincre les fantasmes de ne pas se raidir dans leur refus de la vie". Le fantasmagorique à l'état pur, cette errance psychique et ontique — loin, infiniment, cela va sans dire, de toute appréciation, et notion, de "vie errante" ou de "dérive majeure de la nuée" — ne permet pas de percer l'opacité de notre présence au monde. Le besoin qu'éprouve Bonnefoy, se relisant, est plutôt celui d'"observer, [de] réfléchir" — de penser le rêve plutôt que de rêver la pensée comme il dit ailleurs. Les automatismes du *Traité du pianiste* risque de l'emprisonner dans des "formes closes", le mauvais absolu d'un langage qui fige et immobilise là où il cherche à se "restitue[r...]" cet espoir de mes premières années que vivre et parler ont du sens".

Michael Bishop
Dalhousie University

Frédéric Boyer. *Kids*. Paris : P.O.L., 2000. 119 pages. ISBN 2-86744-775-5.

In ten years, Frédéric Boyer has published seventeen books, mostly novels (*Des choses idiotes et douces* received the 1993 Prix du Livre Inter), some essays (*Comprendre et compatir*, same year, for example), some poetry and work not generically defined, such as the present *Kids*, a triptych (*Manhattan*, *Joie* and the long eponymous text) written in usually very short stanzaic structures of free, unrhymed verse. A narrative impulse dominates yet does not clutter itself with landscape, descriptive detail; something more reflective takes over, a reflection uncomplicated, immediate, raw, some might say — they would be wrong — simplistic, relatively at ease with its ordinary probing. The eponymous third narrative poem, *Kids*, has a disarming and deceptive *naïveté* to it, qualities of wit and charm, too, and, at times, a lyrical and metaphorical intensity that can be quite compelling. This, too — one assumes, for if *je* is merely language's pronominal theatre, this remains a text with something to say about what lies *hors texte*, and someone we call Frédéric Boyer can make as good a peg as anyone on which to hang our (pro)nominal hat — is a text with an air of autobiographical authenticity. That it looks to language's teeming rhetorical devices,

which at once distance and assist in drawing near, to stage its existential pertinences alters nothing of the fact that the latter are *felt*, by reader and even our "dead author". "C'est moi sans glose/c'est moi sans rature", Boyer wittily but intensely remarks in the midst of his *récit*. He concludes thusly:

difficile d'imaginer qu'on puisse avoir mal au cœur
ailleurs que dans son propre cœur

A voice that can speak well to many kids about many kids. And with insight and simple charm.

Michael Bishop
Dalhousie University

Liliane Atlan. *Quelques pages arrachées au Grand Livre des Rêves*. Paris : L'Harmattan, 1999. 100 pages. ISBN 2-7384-8296-1; *Petites bibles pour mauvais temps*, Paris : L'Harmattan, 2001. 320 pages. ISBN 2-7475-0268-6..

The work of Liliane Atlan may be said to have reached today the high point of its multifaceted accomplishments. That the latter are not merely aesthetic but profoundly existential, ontological in their bearing upon us, only embellishes them the more. *Petites bibles pour mauvais temps* offers us **B** globally, at the heart of the swirling poetic voicings of *Les Passants*, *Concert brisé*, *Tuer la mort* and the brilliant eponymous final text **B** the lucid and witting transfiguration of disaster into *louange* and *danse* **B** not simply, indeed at all, a funereal eulogy, but a genuine, felt opening of the serial gates of a dancing celebration of being in a place one might have expected to yield nothing but wailing and despair. This, then, is bold, visionary writing, better *rewriting*, of a vital feasibility ever available, despite the Shoah, if we reach for it. A post-Auschwitz lyricism of a particular order, thought impossible **B** yet made possible so that death not remain our inevitable fugue. Little wonder that her work, particularly the theatre (from *Les Messies ou le mal de terre* to *Les Musiciens, les émigrants*) and *Un opéra pour Terezin*, but the poetry too and other writings generically unclassifiable, have increasingly drawn the praise of a wide range of critics in France and many other countries.

Quelques pages arrachées au Grand Livre des Rêves. "Empreintes [qui] restent, confuses, poignantes [, voici] les traces d'une vie de l'âme dans la chair, d'une vie de la chair dans l'âme, d'une pensée nocturne, élémentaire, à l'oeuvre dans nos personnes comme dans l'univers". Dream discourses, shimmeringly but brilliantly outlined, evoked with tight concision and unflinching clarity of articulation, these are texts speaking not just some complex chaos of the psyche, but the latter's opening within us of the doors of our strange and uplifting inner mystery.

Michael Bishop
Dalhousie University