



Left to Right
Fichu, 1999
Tree, 2001
Fracas, 1999



26 ARTIST PROFILE GERARD BELLAART

INTERVIEW: GABRIEL SOLOMONS **PORTRAITS:** MARTIN TOMPKINS

Where do your images come from?

I think because there is an instinctive tendency to never look for semblances and never look for analogies...if you look at a tree for instance, i will see the pathetic fallacy within the forms that constitute the tree, i won't see the tree. Ultimately you come down to the question - do you perceive from an idea that issues from a form or do you perceive from a representation of the form you see?

We are always looking for a dimension that is not directly visible, and we try through the means at our disposal to express what is not visible in what

we see. That is the metamorphic dimension of the work. Not everybody does that. There are lots of little old ladies that are perfectly happy to get the tree to look like what everybody thinks a tree is, but nothing is what it seems. Because each form is overlaid by memories we have, by temperament, by mood at that particular moment which makes impossible to express anything objectively.

Does your childhood memories play an important part in your work?

Well I was brought up in a town (Dorbrecht) which

had a strong tradition of painting, so that influenced the way i saw and observed things; all my schooling and training was very traditional, very rooted in the 19th century. But The means handed down to you from your tradition mustn't freeze you in the period in which they came about. They must allow you to express your own period of time.

How then would you describe memory?

In *Artificial paradise*, a book by Baudelaire, he wrote a little essay called the *palamset* which is only one page long - but which talks about the prop-



Born
10.4.1946 Dordrecht,
The Netherlands

Studied painting, drawing and print-making at the Willem de Kooning Academy of Fine Arts, Rotterdam: The Hague Free Academy & The Royal Academy, Antwerp.

Travelled extensively and lived in Greece, Switzerland, Germany and Austria before settling in England. Gained an early interest in contemporary American Literature through contact with Allen Ginsberg, Gregory Corso, Leonard Cohen and Harold Norse. Subsequent correspondence with Charles Bukowski, Ginsberg and others led to the foundation of the *Cold Turkey Press*

Editor/Publisher of the Cold Turkey Press 1970-1975. Produced first limited editions in English and Dutch poetry and prose by; Garcia Lorca, Cesare Vallejo, Blaise Cendrars, Ezra Pound, William Burroughs, Charles Bukowski, Allen Ginsberg and many others.

Concurrently with working as an artist, Gerard remains active as a translator and editor of literary productions; publishes and designs books and manuals and lectures regularly.

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erties and processes of memory. Basically it says that if we conceive of every experience that we have as a transparent layer, and that each successive and each preceding transparent layer is superimposed on top, these then make messages which we tap into at any time and which we add to and subtract from.

What would you say is your philosophy that you live by as an artist?

Well I think Czeslaw Milosz says it best: "Whatever I am, at whatever place on earth, I hide from people the conviction that I am not from here. It is as if I'd been sent to extract as many colours, tastes, sounds, smells - to experience everything that is a man's share, to transpose what was felt into a magical register and carry it there, from whence I came." ●

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Right
Syzgy, 2000
Below
Sans Connaissance



Work currently on show

A selection of drawings titled 'Miscellania' currently on show at Erasmus University, Rotterdam

Work in Private & public collections in the Netherlands, England, Australia, USA and South Africa

Works in Progress

A 10 x 2.75 meter mural of Vico's tree of knowledge (in collaboration with the Vico scholar William Booth) for the erasmus University, Rotterdam