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Blavier, Beatrix

MAX ERNST: MURALS FOR THE HOME OF PAUL AND GALA ELUARD, EAUBONNE, 1923. (VOLUMES I AND II)

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MAX ERNST: MURALS

FOR THE HOME OF PAUL AND GALA ELUARD,

FAUBONNE, 1923

by

Béatrix Blavier

A THESIS SUBMITTED
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

MASTER OF ARTS

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ABSTRACT

MAX ERNST: MURALS FOR THE HOME OF PAUL AND GALA ELUARD, EAUBONNE, 1923

by Béatrix Blavier

The rediscovery in 1967 of murals painted by Max Ernst in 1923 for the Eaubonne home of his friends, the French poet Paul Eluard and his wife, Gala, shed a new light on Ernst's proto-Surrealist work. However, the paintings of Eaubonne, immediately dispersed after their removal from the former Eluard House, have never been studied as a cycle nor investigated thoroughly. This thesis places the Eaubonne decoration in the context of Ernst's life and work, and provides a complete reconstruction of the decorative program. Interviews with the individuals involved in the recovery of the murals are abundantly quoted. Many of the sources used by Ernst are identified and his working technique is discussed in relation to these sources. Numerous illustrations (several previously unpublished) and a comprehensive interpretation of the works give to the Eaubonne cycle a new significance.
To J. E.
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A project of this sort could not be undertaken without the help of crucial individuals. Cécile Eluard must first be acknowledged for her kindness; the hours spent in her company will remain fond memories. Robert Valette, too, has been a key figure from the outset of this research; the documents, introductions and encouragements he provided were indispensable. Gérard Guyomard answered with great patience my numerous questions; André-François Petit gave me the opportunity to look at several of the Eaubonne paintings; Roger Dérieux shared with me his precious and lively eye-witness account of the recovery of the murals. Finally, a study of Max Ernst's decoration for the Eluard home would not have been possible without the participation of both Pierre Moraine, who lived in the house for forty years, and Jean Fesneau, who owns it now. Thanks to them, my visits to Eaubonne were invaluable experiences.

I offer special acknowledgements to Werner Spies for his oral comments on Max Ernst's oeuvre; to Patrick Waldberg, for evoking his memories of the artist; to Marguerite Bonnet, for her assistance on
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INTRODUCTION

Max Ernst is a major figure in Dada and Surrealism. He has been the subject of a dozen monographs, numerous interviews, and countless articles. At least seventeen one-man exhibitions of his works were held in this country and in Europe between 1950 and his death in 1976. Last but not least, the first three volumes of his catalogue raisonné compiled by Günter Metken and Werner Spies were published a few years ago. But Ernst's complex personality, prolific career and innovative methods have not yet been totally investigated. In a graduate seminar on "Dada and Surrealism" it became apparent that particularly interesting work remained to be done on Ernst's career and life in Paris between 1922 and 1924. Those were crucial years not only for the history of modern art -- Dada was on the wane and Surrealism about to emerge -- but for Max Ernst's oeuvre as well.

Although an active member of Dada in Cologne until the summer of 1922, Max Ernst decided the next autumn to escape Germany. In Paris he became closely associated with Paul and Gala Éluard, whom he had met the preceding year and whose life and home in Eaubonne (a Paris suburb) he soon shared. He also participated in the group activities of those poets, painters and writers -- most of them former Dadaists -- who launched Surrealism in 1924. During these years of transition known by art historians as "l'époque floue," Ernst contributed to various influential periodicals and produced such major works as Au rendez-vous des amis, La Belle Jardinière and Pietà, ou la Révolution la nuit. As a tribute of friendship, he also covered the interior of Paul and Gala Éluard's house in Eaubonne, where he himself lived for more than a year, with powerful images.
Until the late 1960's very little was known about the Eaubonne decoration. Gala and Paul Eluard had separated in 1931, and in 1932 Eluard's house changed hands. Since the paintings were not to the taste of the new owner, the walls were given a paper covering and, in some places, a coat of paint. Ernst's imagery was hidden for nearly forty years. Eluard's daughter Cécile, who was five years old at the time the frescoes were painted, had vague but haunting memories of huge frightening figures in a strange house which she never really liked. Only in 1967 did Cécile Eluard decide to revisit that house, thanks to the almost simultaneous publication of two illustrated books on her father for which she had to gather old photographs and family-related documents.

The search which was initiated in the fall of 1967 revealed that the house still existed and contained at least four large frescoes, four painted doors, one ceiling decoration and a long frieze, all by the hand of Max Ernst. Removed from their structural support and transferred to canvas the following year, the paintings of Eaubonne were immediately offered for sale, and are now scattered over the world in private and public collections.

Ernst's substantial project for the Eluard home -- which first revealed his penchant for decorating his dwellings -- was made known by an exhibition catalogue published in 1969 by the Galerie André-François Petit in Paris. Since then a few of the paintings of particular interest have been reproduced, but no thorough study of the entire program has ever been undertaken. It was not even certain that all of the paintings were recovered, and the very position of the frescoes and other painted elements within the house had not been established.

This study proposes to explore the Eaubonne project in detail, and to give a fresh insight into Max Ernst's early Surrealist work in Paris and his association with Paul Eluard. Such an approach was made pos-
sible by extremely encouraging personal contacts and correspondence with Cécile Eliard; her former husband, Robert Valette; the dealer, André-François Petit; the restorer, Gérard Guyomard; and Jean Fesneau, present owner of the house.

Chapter One brings into focus the historical and biographical background of both the painter and the Eliards. Ernst's early experiments with collage will be considered -- for the Eaubonne paintings should be understood as being in that lineage. Then, emphasis will be placed on the "époque des sommeils," which culminated in the winter of 1922-1923; and, finally, on the spring and summer of 1923 when Ernst conceived the Eaubonne cycle.

The second chapter, devoted to the recovery of the paintings, reveals previously unpublished materials: photographs of the works still in situ; works in the process of being restored; and works never before exhibited or published -- not even in the Spies catalogue raisonné or in the Galerie Petit. A complete reconstruction of the decoration as it was found in 1967 is also provided, as well as the plans of the house in Eaubonne and the location of the paintings in the various rooms.

The manner in which these paintings were removed, restored, and dispersed has created delicate issues of ownership, signature, titles, and documentation -- all of which are discussed in the third chapter.

The fourth chapter is devoted to visual analysis and interpretation of the works. The finding of indisputable sources used by Max Ernst in his murals coupled with the new material explored in Chapter Two and physical examination of the works themselves, permits new, challenging readings.

Finally, the Eaubonne cycle will be reinterpreted in the larger context of Ernst's work. The Eaubonne group presents certain similar-
ities with other programs that Ernst developed in several of his later homes such as in Saint-Martin d'Ardèche and Sedona. But never again was the artist to work on such a large fresco ensemble. The Eaubonne cycle remains unique in the oeuvre of a unique creative spirit.
Chapter I

MAX, GALA, AND PAUL. EARLY ITINERARIES.
FROM A REMARKABLE ENCOUNTER IN COLOGNE (1921)
TO THE SINGULAR COHABITATION IN EAUBONNE (1923-1924)

Nothing at first glance seemed to announce a fellowship between Max Ernst and Eugène-Emile-Paul Grindel. They were born in hostile nations, raised in very different milieux, and heirs of totally diverging traditions. Ernst, the second of seven children, was born in 1891 in a small German town midway between Cologne and Bonn. His father, by profession a teacher for deaf and dumb children and by taste an amateur academic painter, held the entire family under Prussian discipline and strict Catholic obedience. Grindel, only child of a middle class French couple settled in the outskirts of Paris, was born in 1895. His father, a successful real estate developer, moved to Paris in 1908 where the coddled Eugène-Emile-Paul casually attended school. Ernst and Grindel, better known as Paul Eluard,\(^1\) nevertheless became associated in the history of both Art and Literature as two of the finest members of the Surrealist movement. Their two names, many times coupled on title pages, drawings and paintings, are still synonymous with friendship. But more than a friendship, a sort of kinship brought the two men together.

Both were of fragile health. As a youth, Eluard suffered from tuberculosis;\(^2\) Ernst is said to have had bouts of hysteria as an adolescent.\(^3\) Early on both young men exhibited unquestionable talent. Ernst started to paint as a child, and by the age of twenty-two he had already experimented with Symbolism, Cubism, Orphism and Futurism without feeling himself tied to any of those movements.\(^4\) Also as a
teenager, Eluard wrote short stories, and had his first poems published when he turned eighteen. But similarities between the two young artists did not show before the year 1920. At the time, both were married, well entangled in fatherhood, and fighting for their artistic futures.

The First World War had left Germany and France wounded and disillusioned. Both young men had been involved in the conflict. Years later Paul Eluard was to write about this bloody episode:

"En février 1917, le peintre surréaliste Max Ernst et moi, nous étions sur le front, à un kilomètre à peine l'un de l'autre. L'artilleur allemand Max Ernst bombardait les tranchées où, fantassin français, je montais la garde. Trois ans après, nous étions les meilleurs amis du monde et nous luttons ensemble, depuis, avec acharnement, pour la même cause, celle de l'émancipation totale de l'homme."

Although stamped with a certain "romanticism," Eluard's account epitomizes the absurdity of war and the crisis bourgeois values had undergone on each bank of the Rhine. The pervasive influence of Dada -- a subversive movement officially born in 1916 in a little café in Switzerland -- had spread over Germany and was also felt in France. Subverting what remained of the nineteenth century bourgeois rationalism, Dada offered artists in both countries a safety valve. By the end of the world conflict, a community of thought was born between Eluard and Ernst, of which they were not aware until Dada provided the necessary bridge.

Ernst's encounter with the movement followed his so-called "rebirth." Associated with Alfred Gruenwald (better known as Johannes Theodor Baargeld), Ernst became very active in the avant-garde art circles of Cologne. One of his first activities was the publication of Der Ventilator, an anti-bourgeois paper condemning government, church and art. Between February and March 1919, five issues were distributed but the publication was eventually banned by the British army of occu-
pation. Later that year, a trip to Munich brought Ernst and Baargeld into contact with Dada publications from Switzerland. Not only was the Dada phenomenon a revelation to Ernst, but also Chirico's *Pittura Metafisica* that he discovered at the same time in a 1919 issue of the Italian review *Valori Plastici*. Moreover, the Munich escapade brought him wonderful news. His old friend Hans Arp -- whom he had lost track of after 1914 -- had survived the war and was an active member of Dada in Zurich. Dada, Arp and Chirico were the stimuli Ernst needed.

A series of eight prints, *Fiat Modes, pereat ars*, that Ernst published in 1919 reflects his response to Chirico. Contemporary oil paintings also show his debt to the Italian master. The similarities are striking between, for example, a plate from *Fiat Modes* (fig. 1) and Chirico's *Il figlio prodigo* reproduced in the April-May issue of *Valori Plastici* (fig. 2); or Ernst's 1919 *Aquis submersus* (fig. 3) and Chirico's *The Delights of the Poet* of 1913 (fig. 4). All four works include the same dummy-like figures and the same forced perspective. According to Lucy Lippard, Ernst recalled painting *Aquis submersus* immediately after seeing the small volume on Chirico's "12 Opere di Giorgio de Chirico," published by *Valori Plastici* in August 1919. Lippard goes on, asserting that "the exaggerated perspective of the 'swimming pool' was probably inspired by the platform in Poissons Sacrés (fig. 5) to which he [Ernst] was specially attracted." She nevertheless admits that "coincidentally the buildings, pool and clock in *Aquis submersus* closely resemble those in *Delights of the Poet*, which was not in the booklet," but that these elements might have been "suggested by a drawing, *Solitude*, which was." The influence of Chirico's enigmatic visions was essential not only for Ernst but for the whole Surrealist group in the mid-twenties. Much has been written about this quasi-mythical stream of inspiration, but the crucial and long-lasting impact produced by Chirico on Ernst must be emphasized. Some elements of the Saubonne cycle will prove it once again.
Parallel to Chirico's influence and just as pervasive, was the impact of Dada. Some of Ernst's works of 1919 reflect the mechanistic aspects, the machine-like compositions dear to Picabia and often reproduced as illustrations in his Dada publication 391. It is clear that Katharina ondulata (fig. 6) owes something to Picabia's Parade Amoureuse (fig. 7). Likewise, Le mugissement des féroces soldats (fig. 8) seems to reflect Mouvement Dada (fig. 9), and Adieu mon beau pays de Marie Laurencin (fig. 10) reminds us of Picabia's Portrait de Marie Laurencin, Four in Hand of 1916-1917 (fig. 11). Elements borrowed from Picabia's composition -- the bicycle chain and the propeller -- as well as the use of words in the picture, create a strong visual link between the two works. To say, as Uwe Schneede did, that "Max Ernst's drawings differ from Picabia's principally in that they are not in any way symbolic in character" seems, at least for the works making reference to Marie Laurencin, a little short-sighted. Ernst's caption refers more to Laurencin's country than to the young woman herself, of course; but the curious composition suggests some sort of anthropomorphic form, symbolically feminine in its symmetry. Although acknowledging Ernst's debt to Picabia, Lucy Lippard notes a major difference between the two artists' work -- especially in their handling of machine-like forms. She sees Ernst's treatment as "delicate, ordered, very abstract, [and] in spirit very different from Picabia's careless awkward tracing."

The motifs used by Ernst in these specific works are typographical plates or stamps borrowed from a printer's shop. With the help of pen and ink lines, Ernst assembled relief print designs and rubber stamp motifs. Identical elements are recognizable in several contemporary compositions. Adieu mon beau pays de Marie Laurencin shares for instance with Le mugissement des féroces soldats the same cylindrical shape topped with two circular forms interlaced with three smaller circles. In Le Mugissement an Islamic motif (dark star and crescent) has been added; in Adieu mon beau pays the cylindrical shape is tilted and inverted, but also enhanced by a religious-like motif, a six
pointed star. The bicycle chain element, central to Adieu mon beau pays is found again in Objet ambigu (fig. 12) and in Etamines et Marseillaise (fig. 13), all three from 1919.

Very soon, Ernst headed towards new experiments stimulated by another source which he explained in autobiographical notes:

"One rainy day in 1919, finding myself in a village on the Rhine, I was struck by the obsession which held under my gaze the pages of an illustrated catalogue showing objects designed for anthropologic, microscopic, psychologic, mineralogic, and paleontologic demonstration. There I found brought together elements of figuration so remote that the sheer absurdity of that collection provoked a sudden intensification of the visionary faculties in me and brought forth an illusive succession of contradictory images, double, triple and multiple images, piling up on each other with the persistence and rapidity which are peculiar to love memories and visions of half-sleep.

These visions called themselves new planes, because of their meeting in a new unknown (the plane of non-agreement). It was enough at that time to embellish these catalogue pages, in painting or drawing, and thereby in gently reproducing only that which saw itself in me, a color, a pencil mark, a landscape foreign to the represented objects, the desert, a tempest, a geological cross-section, a floor, a single strait line signifying the horizon ... thus I obtained a faithful fixed image of my hallucination and transformed into revealing dramas my most secret desires -- from what had been before only some banal pages of advertising."

This account of the discovery of Ernst's distinctive vision of collage is so famous that it had to be quoted in entirety. But, as Werner Spies has noted, this crucial text went through a series of transformations. A first, shorter version of it was published in 1932 under the title "Inspiration to Order." Developments were added in a 1933 article, "Comment on force l'imagination," released in the last issue of Le Surréalisme au Service de la Révolution. Then followed the standard 1936 text of Cahiers d'Art, later translated into English and reproduced by Robert Motherwell in Beyond Painting, which
reads as quoted above. This slow maturation is noteworthy for Ernst's description of his discovery of "frottage" followed the same pattern. Both texts must in fact be understood in the Surrealist context and atmosphere of the mid-thirties in which they were written, that is, a time when "pure psychic automatism" was the prevalent rule for artistic creation.

Legend and myth apart, the initial shock, the hallucinatory visions, the convergence of contradictory images on a "plane of non-agreement" became the customary ingredients used by Ernst in a great number of collages produced in 1920. Anything at hand of sufficient interest to him was cut out, glued in unexpected order on a paper or cardboard support, and accentuated and/or distorted by pen or ink lines and sometimes, color. Fragments of wall-paper, botanical illustrations, anatomical or engineering charts, photographs and advertisements were in turn used by Ernst in this prolific year.

An important contribution to the understanding of Ernst's early collages has recently been made by Dirk Teuber. Comparing Ernst's account of his discovery of the process of collage in Beyond Painting to a much later autobiographical text, Teuber noted that the painter had added an important detail: the mention of a "Lehrmittelanstalt" catalogue as the very trigger of his imagination. Researches conducted by Teuber lead to a significant discovery. Lehrmittel -- which can be translated as "teaching aids" had been offered since 1873 to potential buyers in Cologne first by the Hugo Indersau Company, then under a new ownership, by the Leopold Unverdorben Company. In 1919 the teaching material was still advertised by catalogue and sold through a salesroom on Richtstrasse 4. A thorough study of the catalogue done by Teuber demonstrates that of the one hundred and forty-five surviving works done by Ernst in Cologne between 1919 and 1922, over eighty can be shown to use direct pictures-quotes, not counting formal stylistic influences and motifs worked over again in paintings and drawings. Moreover, of the forty-four works known to involve "drawing over" by
Ernst, twenty-five were produced using picture materials from the Lehrmittel catalogue. Teuber also found that forty concepts and word series in Ernst's captions to his artworks had their origins in the catalogue.26

The description of Ernst's production process can be illustrated by two examples presented by Teuber. For instance, Démonstration hydrométrique à tuer la température (fig. 14) makes use of page 756 of the Lehrmittel catalogue (fig. 15), but Ernst has turned his source upside down -- a technique previously used in some of his printer's plates works -- concealed the printed numbers under paint and, by the virtue of a few geometric lines, created a receding space similar to Chirico's disquieting visions. Likewise, in Les moutons (fig. 16), Ernst has combined elements from page 236 of the Lehrmittel catalogue (fig. 17) with other partial images from unknown printed sources.

But this cold analysis of the genesis of Ernst's collages must not make us forget the wit and pleasure with which the artist selected, confronted and coupled or grafted things which are normally alien to one another. Such manipulations could have resulted in chaotic hybrids; but instead, paradoxical similarity, irrational logic and ambiguous interpretations hold the disparate "pieces" together, making of each collage a visual poem. Images as different in their concept and their media as, for instance, Le rossignol chinois (fig. 18)27 or Un peu malade le cheval (fig. 19),28 when grasped as complete representations, seem perfectly balanced. This balance is primarily the result of Ernst's careful choices. Not any fan could have been used in the Le rossignol chinois; its exact shape and size fit the overall arrangement. The same can be said about the lateral position of the cyclopean eye, which, despite its fixity, gives to the composition an unmistakable humourous tone. Without this tiny detail Ernst's assemblage would have fallen apart.
1. Max Ernst, *Self-Portrait or max ernst et caesar buonarotti*, 1920

collage, 17.6 x 11.5 cm.
The selectivity of Ernst's choices should not, however, overshadow the role of chance in the first stage of his creative process. The finding of the printer's equipment, the discovery of the Lehrmittel catalogue, Ernst's sudden response to images encountered at random in old magazines -- all these belong to those "chance encounters" dear to the Dadaists and, later, to the Surrealists. But chance is a many-faced phenomenon and Ernst's experiments in that field were of a different essence from those of the Zurich Dada. Arp and his colleague, Tristan Tzara, were mainly interested in chance as a means to "prevent recognizable patterns from developing." As Harriet Ann Watts has rightly noted, "the indeterminacy at play in Max Ernst's procedures was the element of unpredictability, the moment of surprise when subjective responses might be awakened to random juxtapositions of images, of textures, of words." Ernst let himself react to images encountered by chance. Images were then used as "ready made" in the Duchampian sense, but also combined -- and here Ernst went further than Duchamp -- with other fragments of reality brought together on the same plane.

These "fragments of reality" associated with the notion of collage bring forth the traditional comparison between Cubist "papiers collés" and Dada collages. As early as 1923, Aragon, comparing the two techniques, saw a drastic difference between them:

"Pour les cubistes, le timbre-poste, le journal, la boîte d'allumettes que le peintre collait sur son tableau, avaient la valeur d'un test, d'un instrument de contrôle de la réalité même du tableau. C'est autour de l'objet directement emprunté au monde extérieur ... que le peintre établissait les rapports entre les diverses parties du tableau [...]"

Chez Max Ernst, il en va tout autrement. Ces éléments qu'il emprunte sont surtout des éléments dessinés, et c'est au dessin que le collage supplée le plus souvent. Le collage devient ici un procédé poétique, parfaitement opposable dans ses fins au collage cubiste dont l'intention est purement réaliste."
But, in more recent years it has been demonstrated that Cubist elements of reality were not devoid of additional interpretation. The "potential verbal meaning or associative value," the "ambiguous verbal double entendres" of the printed, stenciled, and pasted words which proliferate in Cubist art have been analyzed by Robert Rosenblum as forerunners of the "social aggressiveness of words in Futurism and Dada."32

Not only chance, but friendly collaboration was an important aspect of the Dadaist methods. Sustained collaboration among vanguard artists was not a totally new idea,33 but with Dada and Surrealism it became an increasingly important factor in artistic creation. Solid proof of this trend can be found in Die Schamme, edited by Dada-max (Ernst) -- but also signed by Baargeld and published in Cologne in February 192034 -- and, concurrently, in the Fatagaga experiments. According to Georges Hugnet:

"Beginning in 1919, Baargeld and Ernst, who were painting spontaneously, without premeditation, joined Arp in a work in a profoundly Dada spirit, the importance of which they did not realize. Here it was less the result that counted than the intent inherent in the act of creation. Dada destroyed the individual personality: Baargeld and Ernst worked together on paintings, each unaware of what the other was doing. Once, after Arp had expressed regret at not having done certain collages with Ernst, Ernst proposed that they both sign them. From this Dadaism pact was born a whole series of collages in collaboration called "Fatagaga," an abbreviation for "Fabrication de tableaux garantis gazo-métriques."35

Among the Fatagaga is the famous collage La Suisse, lieu de naissance de Dada, also entitled Physiomythologisches diluvialbild (fig. 20), signed by both Max Ernst and Hans Arp. But, as Lucy Lippard first recognized and Werner Spies later demonstrated, Arp's collaboration was at the most only intellectual, that is, the collages were made by Ernst alone and then given a title by Arp.36 Arp's humorous account of the
Fatagaga invention belongs consequently to the well known Dada sport of "brouiller les cartes."

Perhaps more Dada in concept were two controversial exhibitions — one held in November 1919 in the Cologne Kunstverein, and the other in the Brauhaus Winter in April 1920. Both manifestations were meant to provoke the public. Concerning the first one, Ernst himself wrote:

"[La] 'Société des Arts' organise dans les salles du Kunstverein une exposition des 'tendances nouvelles'. Baargeld et Max que les organisateurs ont imprudemment invités, saisissent l'occasion par les cheveux avec une joie non dissimulée [...]. En dehors des œuvres de Baargeld, Freundlich et Ernst figurent aussi dans l'exposition celles d'artistes analphabètes ("peintre du dimanche"), de "malades mentaux" et de dilettantes. Et aussi des objets métalliques en fil de fer [...]. Enfin, quelques objets trouvés: des galets, des parapluies, un marteau de piano, des pots de fleurs vides, etc [...]"

L'exposition eut l'effet d'un éclair dans un ciel serein, suivi d'un coup de tonnerre audible non seulement en Allemagne non occupée, mais aussi au-delà des frontières jusqu'à Paris, Zurich et New York."

The Paris avant-garde would have been struck even more by the "Dada Vorfrühling" exhibition which a few months later incurred severe British censorship. Held in the backyard of a Cologne restaurant, the only entrance to the show was through the men's room. Visitors were urged to destroy works offensive to them, and damaged objects were constantly replaced. The police closed the show for "outrage to public decency," but it was later reopened, recalled Max Ernst, when it was proved that the only "pornographic" item that could be found in the show was a tiny collage borrowed from Durer's Adam und Eva. Following the exhibition, an invitation came from Paris. André Breton, who already was familiar with some of Ernst's works through Tzara, offered to organize a show for him.
After the Armistice (November 1918), there was no reason for the Dadaists to stay in Switzerland. The avant-garde had deserted Zurich and Ernst's only dream, like that of many other young artists, was to go to Paris. Picabia had settled back in the city in the spring of 1919. Tzara, too, had emigrated in January 1920 and joined the "groupe Littérature" which, at the time, gathered André Breton, Philippe Soupault, Louis Aragon and Paul Eluard. The latter was a new member of the group. Eluard had met Breton in November 1918 and joined Littérature in the spring of 1919. Before the end of that year, he had become a regular contributor to the review.

At the same time, Eluard published his own review, Proverbe sub-titled "Feuille mensuelle pour la justification des mots" (p. 17 and fig. 21). His intent, in the six issues printed from February 1920 to July 1921, was to investigate words and phrases, spoken and written language. Since his adolescence, stylistics had been a major concern for Eluard. Dada gave him the opportunity to rebel against language as a vehicle for atrophied thought. Proverbe n° 1 clearly announced Eluard's intentions. Quoted on the first page were these lines of Apollinaire:

"O Bouches l'homme est à la recherche d'un nouveau language
Auquel le grammairien d'aucune langue n'aura rien à dire."

Paulhan, Breton, Tzara, and Soupault's signatures also appeared in the first issue. Aragon and Picabia joined them in later issues. Besides poems by Eluard and one or two longer texts (one, by Paulhan, entitled "Syntaxe" appeared in the first issue), the four-page review essentially contained aphorisms, sayings, rebuses and commonplace expressions dissected down to the last word. The idea was in the air. Several Zurich Dadaists and Ernst in Cologne were also interested in demonstrating that words were not only translation of thought but things in themselves, a material to be used and transformed. But, better than most other Dada reviews and with a special tone, Proverbe
did put into application the Dadaist principle of disjointedness of the language. As noted by Sanouillet, Eluard in his concern for the meaning of language and rejuvenated vocabulary, formed part of a tradition which could be traced up to Mallarmé. Coincidentally, he also followed a path parallel to the one taken by Marcel Duchamp in New York during the same period. 46 Maurice Nadeau, too, the historian of Surrealism, has insisted on Proverbe's significance. He wrote: "[Eluard] finds in commonplaces, in "proverbes," in ready-made phrases, the explosive value which they originally possessed and which they have lost with use. He restores it by puns, spoonerisms, reversing the usual order in the sentence."47 As an illustration, Nadeau quoted an example taken from Proverbe N°3, p. 1:

"Je me demande un peu: qui trompe-t-on ici?
Ah.
Je me trompe un peu: qui DEMANDE-t-on ici?"

Besides his friends at Littérature and Proverbe, Eluard had made the acquaintance of several painters, namely Ozenfant, Derain and Lhote. He asked the latter to illustrate Les animaux et leurs hommes, a reunion of his poems published by "Au Sans Pareil" in January 1920. Eluard always paid much attention to the illustrations of his works. 48 The company of painters and writers -- which he cultivated after being discharged from the army in 1919 -- and the influence of Ozenfant and Le Corbusier's review, L'Esprit Nouveau, nourished his inclinations, and shaped his temperament as a collector. Summarizing Eluard's answers to the "antipalmares" published in issue n° 18 of Littérature (mars 1921, p. 1-7), J.C. Gateau created the chart 49 shown below:
ENQUÊTE CHIFFRÉE SUR LES PEINTRES
(extrait de Littérature n° 18, mars 1921)
notation de 20 à —25, le zéro correspondant à l'indifférence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>P. Eluard</th>
<th>A. Breton</th>
<th>Aragon</th>
<th>Tzara</th>
<th>Moyenne</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vinci………</td>
<td>—20</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>—25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michel-Ange……</td>
<td>—20</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>—25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raphael……..</td>
<td>—25</td>
<td></td>
<td>—20</td>
<td>—25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greco………...</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>—7</td>
<td>—10</td>
<td>—25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poussin…......</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>—25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delacroix……...</td>
<td>—15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>—25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ingres………..</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>—25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corot………..</td>
<td>—22</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>—25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manet………..</td>
<td>— 8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>—25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Van Gogh………</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>—25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rodin………..</td>
<td>—20</td>
<td>—25</td>
<td>—20</td>
<td>—25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renoir………..</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>—25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cézanne…….</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>—1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>—25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henri Rousseau</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>—25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matisse……...</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>—25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Picasso……...</td>
<td>— 2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Braque……...</td>
<td>—10</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Derain……...</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>—20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lhote………...</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>—10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>—25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chagall……...</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chirico……...</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>—25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duchamp……...</td>
<td>— 3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Picabia……...</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arp………….</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Man Ray………</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Members of the group had been asked to grade -- in a system resembling the school grading -- from —25 to +20 (0 representing absolute indifference) a long list of names including composers, writers and painters, but also some outsiders such as Jesus Christ, Mistinguett and the "Pilules Pink"! The idea, of course, was not to obtain a "classement," but rather -- in a true Dada spirit -- a "déclassement," that is, a sort of "counter honors list."
Despite the corrosive purpose of the grading, Eluard's answers seem, when compared to Tzara's reactions, rather moderate. Painting was always a very serious matter for Eluard. His likes and dislikes, as expressed in the above chart, may reflect to a large extent his very personal inclinations and tendencies. Gateau questions only the high ranking given to Picabia and Man Ray; for the rest, he sees in Eluard's grading a coherent and almost too traditional attitude. Eluard's taste for light (Matisse is given +13), for architectural space (Poussin, Cézanne, Lhote rank also +13), for visionary images (Le Douanier Rousseau reached +14, and Chirico +16), may very well explain Eluard's later addiction to Ernst's work.

Noticeable in the Littérature reference list of painters is the absence of Ernst. But two months later, by May 1921, his name was on everyone's lips, at least in the Dadaist circles.

The show proposed by Breton to Ernst opened at the Galerie "Au Sans Pareil," avenue Kléber, on May 2, 1921. Earlier in the spring, an impressive shipment of works had arrived from Cologne and had already fascinated certain individuals. "Je me souviens de l'é motion, d'une qualité inéprouvée par la suite, qui nous saisit, Aragon, Soupault, Tzara et moi à leur découverte," wrote Breton years later. "De Cologne ils arrivaient à l'instant même chez Picabia ou nous nous trouvions. L'objet extérieur avait rompu avec son champ habituel, ses parties constitutantes s'étaient en quelque sorte émancipées de lui-même, de manière à entretenir avec d'autres éléments des rapports entièrement nouveaux, échappant au principe de réalité."

The continuing impact of Ernst's first works shown in Paris was confirmed a month later by Soupault: "Ce qui pourtant attirait à juste titre l'attention et non pas, comme pour mes 'oeuvres', le rire ou la colère, c'était les tableaux de Max Ernst. Je fus ébloui. Tout le reste de l'exposition y compris mes contributions me parut superfétatoire."
The opening at Au Sans Pareil was a complete pandemonium. The exhibition theme: "La mise sous whisky marin se fait en crème kaki et en 5 anatomies," indeed sounded very Dada. Aragon, Soupault, Tzara entertained the crowd, screaming and shouting in a good Dada tradition. The writer Benjamin Péret and the Russian painter Charchoune, who were sympathetic to the Parisian Dada group, joined forces with their colleagues and shook hands for more than an hour that evening.\(^53\) Of more lasting importance than this noisy spectacle, is Breton's preface to the catalogue and the list of the works on display. Christened as "dessins mécanoplastiques plasto-plastique peinto-peintures anaplasicques anatomiques antizymiques aérographiques antiphonaires arrosables et républicains" by Ernst and the authors of the catalogue, fifty-six works framed by Breton and his wife-to-be, Simone Khan,\(^54\) were for the first time displayed for the public curiosity.

A controversy -- which is not yet settled -- as to Breton's exact interest in Max Ernst at the time is worth mentioning here in order to understand the context into which the German painter had stepped. Michel Sanouillet admits Breton's interest in Ernst's works, but interprets it as a weapon used by Breton and his friends against Picabia.\(^55\) The fact is that, by May 1921, serious dissensions had arisen among the Dadaists. Veiled warfare had been the rule since the previous winter. Relations between what appears to be two factions -- Breton, Aragon and Soupault on one side; Picabia, Tzara, and Ribemont-Dessaigne on the other -- are described by William Camfield as already "exceedingly chilly" in December 1920. "Lingering resentment" against Breton in January 1921, then "disgust" in the following April, were Picabia's own feelings about "what had become of Dada."\(^56\) Marguerite Bonnet considers Sanouillet's approach to be too competitive. According to her, Breton's keenness on defending Ernst and on helping for the show, is but the proof that his Dada involvement was over. She sees that Breton esteemed Ernst's collages not as of embodiments of Dada but as refigurations of something new.\(^57\) Actually, Ernst's show at Au Sans Pareil was to be one of the last manifestations of Dada in Paris.
LA MISE SOUS WHISKY MARIN
DE FAIT EN CRÈME KAKI A ENGIN ANATOMIE
VIVE LE SPORT
MAX ERNST

L'invention de la photographie a pour un coup mis aux voies moto d'aujourd'hui, un peu comme qu'on pense au laitue automatique apparue à la fin du XIXe siècle. Elle est une véritable photographie en pâte. Un manufacturier ancien permettant d'assez tendre à son tour que la photo doit être trés impérative, propose les peintures provoquant peu de légères suggestions avec des images vues de l'auteur. Malheureusement, l'auteur bâtarde qui tend à voyer sans cesse la disparition d'éléments essentiels, ne peut être joyeux de produire un tel délit d'appréciation. Il parvenait en somme à imposer un très noble effet de sirope. Ce qui a été fait est devenu par ces acceptations qu'on attribue à nos peintres. C'est pour avoir mis en cires, dans un bateau, cette belle essentielle que le symbole est le ruban en ruban. La croissance en un temps et un espace absolument perçu à distance. Denis ne se doute pas pour mieux. Il pagne siècle, sous de se concentrer aux bouts d'une perspective donnée, mais naturellement le point de départ se trouverait être aux maisons mauretaines.

Placed in this context, Breton's preface to the catalogue is thus particularly interesting. It prefigures some of the formulas which three years later made the Manifeste du Surréalisme one of the most famous texts of the twentieth century. Describing Ernst's procedure, Breton wrote of his "wonderful power to grasp mutually distant realities without going beyond the field of our experience and to draw a spark from this juxtaposition; to bring within the reach of our senses abstract forms capable of the same intensity and distinctness as others; and, while depriving us of any system of reference, to put us out of place in our very recollection."  

As for the works themselves, a few had been already purchased by Philippe Soupault (C'est le chapeau qui fait l'homme), Louis Aragon (Le cygne est bien paisible), or Tristan Tzara (Trophée Hypertrophique). Apparently, Paul Eluard was not among the first buyers. Nonetheless, his encounter with Ernst's work was, more than for anyone else, a shock. What Eluard had been doing on the plane of language for a year or two, Ernst had realized in forms, shapes and colors. Was Eluard immediately seduced by this visual realm "beyond painting" announced by the catalogue, or more fascinated by the verbal magic of the titles given by Ernst to his collages? The painter's ambivalence -- words and images associated/collided -- was so close to Eluard's quest in language at that time that the poet surely felt an immediate and strong attraction to the works displayed in the tiny Galerie avenue Kléber. Three works included in the show: La petite fistule lacrimale qui fait tic-tac, Le rossignol chinois (fig. 18), and Étampes et Marseillaise (fig. 13), were in his possession in 1924. It is certain that Eluard could not rest until he met the painter.

In the mean time, Ernst was delighted by the success of the show. He wrote to Tzara: "La recette de l'ouverture de la saison et de mon exposition 'Au Sans Pareil' est très bien, elle m'a fait un grand plaisir." Soon thereafter he decided to vacation in the Tyrol with his wife and his son Jimmy. He was joined in Tarrenz, a small village
close to Imst, by Tzara and his friend, Maya, and by Arp and Sophie Tauber. From this summer in the mountains there remains "Dada au grand air — Der Sängerkreig in Tirol," a four-page brochure (fig. 27) important in two aspects. As a review, it tolled the bell for Dada's death throes; as a printed work, it announced a shift in Ernst's technique, to be discussed below. After Picabia had officially abandoned Dada on May 11, 1921, there remained on one side Tzara and Ribemont-Dessaigne who advocated mass entertainment and a certain form of nihilism, and, on the other, Breton, Aragon and Soupault, who had grown tired of provocation and meaningless performances. The mock trial of Maurice Barrès, "Le Procès Barrès," organized in May, had clearly exposed the tensions of a group splitting into two factions.

Nevertheless, Breton and Simone, who had just married, as well as Eluard and his wife, Gala, decided to join the Tyrolian team at the end of the summer. A letter from Paul Eluard to Tzara dated August 27, 1921 announced their project:

"C'est entendu, mais je ne pourrai vous rejoindre qu'à la fin de septembre. Comme vous le savez, nos vacances sont surtout pour ma femme dont la santé est précaire. Fait-il beau en octobre? Breton et Simone partiront avant nous. Serez-vous encore là-bas. Et Max Ernst et Arp que vous assurerez de ma sympathie.

[...] Envoyez-moi des poèmes et des notes, et des phrases pour Proverbe et demandez des poèmes et des phrases à Ernst."  

As a matter of fact, the Bretons arrived near the end of September, but when Eluard and Gala were able to join them around the first of October, Max and Lou Ernst had already left for Cologne, and Tzara was back in Paris. Eluard surely was disappointed. He nevertheless decided to accompany Breton and Simone to Vienna where Breton wished to meet Freud. A postcard to Tzara signed by Eluard alone ("Eluard vous aime. Il est à Vienne avec Breton et Simone") is dated October 6, 1921. Later that month in Tarrenz, Eluard wrote a long letter to
Tzara — a letter whose tone is almost Surrelistic — explaining his desire to go to Cologne in order to meet Max Ernst:

"Le grand panneau blanc au dessous de ma fenêtre est plein de soleil. L'on s'attend toujours à y voir apparaître la petite couronne de deux lèvres rouges et le miracle d'un œil. Il pousse de beaux amoureux dans les bois de nos promenades.

Le ler du mois prochain nous partons pour Munich où nous resterons 2 or 3 jours de là pour Cologne. Je voudrais être sûr qu'Ernst y soit à ce moment. Voulez-vous le lui demander. Comme l'on dort bien ici, le pays doit être plein d'aveugles invisibles qui préparent les linges du sommeil. Le soir, tous ces soirs splendides, la lune et leur cœur se poursuivent. Nous profitons d'un temps étonnant. Le Tyrol a sorti pour [nous] son plus chaud, son soleil le plus tremblant.

Nous n'allons à Cologne que pour voir Ernst. Naturellement. Je n'ai pas de réponse à nos cartes et j'ai peur qu'elles ne lui soient pas parvenues. Je n'ai aucune raison de me priver de ce qui me fait plaisir. JE PARS DANS 9 JOURS [...]

In retrospect, it seems possible that, besides the simple desire to meet the painter, Eluard had already in mind to ask him to illustrate the collection of poems he was presently putting together. On November 4, 1921, Gala and Paul arrived in Cologne and headed towards 4 Kaiser-Wilhelm Ring for an encounter which was to change their life, and Ernst's as well.

Immediately the affinities began to form. "Parenté de tournure d'esprit" ...; "sympathie de l'intelligence et du coeur"; "aimantation naturelle"; "amitié magique", "the most fateful encounter of Max Ernst's life" — biographers and scholars vie with one another to describe the spark of friendship that ignited the two men on that day in Cologne. Ernst himself, in an elliptic manner, later wrote: "Tout de suite une amitié qui durera." But very soon it became obvious that Gala was also part of the scenario.
Four snapshots taken during that week in Cologne (p. 27 and fig. 22-24) speak of shared joy, of sexual attraction, and of intimacy. Messages of tenderness are clearly readable between the painter and Eluard's lovely wife. Max has given her his Iron Cross; Gala wears it ostentatiously on her dark dress. Striking in these images is Max and Gala's obvious need to be close to each other. "Si le sourire d'Eluard demeure énigmatique," writes J.C. Gateau, "l'observation attentive de ces clichés ne laisse pas de doute sur l'attirance réciproque de Max et de Gala. Reste à imaginer? On veille tard, on boit de l'eau de vie dans des verres de couleur, on se lit des poèmes et le trouble charnel rode dans l'air." 75 Lou Strauss-Ernst, in her unpublished memoirs, describes Eluard's wife in rather severe words which, nevertheless, confirm that an affair immediately developed between Max and Gala. 76

Of that playful and tense atmosphere there remains a letter to Tzara -- written in common by Paul and Max, Lou and Gala -- whose text prefigures Ernst and Eluard's collaboration in 1922, 77 and a poem dedicated to Max Ernst by Paul Eluard:

"Dans un coin l'inceste agile
Tourne autour de la virginité d'un petite robe
Dans un coin le ciel délivré
Aux épines de l'orage laisse des boules blanches.

Dans un coin plus clair que tous les yeux
On attend les poissons d'angoisse.
Dans un coin la voiture de verdure de l'été
Immobile glorieuse et pour toujours.

A la lueur de la jeunesse
Des lampes allumées très tard
La première montre ses seins que tuent des insectes rouges."

This poem was first published in 1921 in the review Action, 78 then inserted in Répétitions. Reproduced a number of times and often commented on, 79 its text has only been seriously analyzed once by Jean-Charles Gateau. Gateau both translates Eluard's poetic abstraction and
From left to right: Gala, Max and Jimmy Ernst, Lou, Paul, and Baargeld.
sees correspondences between Eluard's chosen words and Ernst's usual elements of collage:

"Notons d'abord la prégénance de la forme du carré qui imprègne tout le texte: par le quatrain, par la quadruple localisation dans un coin fortement scandé en début de vers [...] Ces localisations éveillent infaiblement l'idée du jeu des quatre coins; jeu pas très innocent puisqu'il exige la mobilité des joueurs, la permutation des places, et l'isolement d'un perdant qui devra reconquérir sa place à la partie suivante. Cette prégénance du carré joue en trois sens; celui de l'espace intime et clos: la chambre (en argot: "la carrée"); celui de la mobilité des partenaires sexuels ("la partie carrée"), enfin, celui de la surface quadrangulaire des dessins, collages et tableaux [...]"

... A ce niveau [activité créatrice de Max Ernst], la structure d'ensemble [du poème d'Eluard] peut évoquer le rassemblement sur le papier d'éléments hétéroclites qui caractérisent le collage (robes, épines, boules, yeux, poissons, voitures, verdure, seins, insectes) [...] On peut voir aussi dans tourner autour le mouvement courbe des tisseur en train de découper une figurine dans un catalogue de modes ..."}

Ernst, on the other hand, made Paul's and Gala's portraits. We do not know what was the first image Ernst made of Gala, but Ernst's first vision of Paul remains troubling (fig. 25). The poet is shown both in profile view, frozen as a statue, and frontally, human and blindfolded. Significant of Eluard's fondness for this image of himself is the fact that he kept it until his death in 1952.

Of greater importance, perhaps, for the Eaubonne cycle are the eleven collages Eluard chose during his stay in Cologne among Ernst's later works. Eluard intended to use them as illustrations for Répétitions, a collection of poems on which he had been working for several years. The book was published early in 1922 by "Au Sans Pareil." In terms of style, these collages were different from the earlier ones shown in Paris in May 1921. Homogeneous in their inspiration and motifs, they revealed a shift in Ernst's source materials. Most of the collages were made up of elements borrowed from nineteenth-century
popular wood engravings and therefore shared a certain unity in the hatching system. Contemporary images such as Magicien (fig. 100); Enfant (fig. 102) or L'invention (fig. 26) clearly show Ernst's change of mood. There is a dominant sense of order. These carefully constructed collages seem also more narrative in their structure than the earlier ones. The glued elements are now placed in a scenic space. We almost perceive the developing of a "story." Ink lines, which in earlier collages bridged the various parts, have decreased or practically disappeared. Important also is the fact that those collages in their printed form, that is, in the book Répétitions, took on another appearance. The original work has become a sort of "study" for the finished image. Traces of the cutting or pasting and overlapped fragments have been eliminated by the printing process. Even the trained eye has difficulty in deciphering and analyzing the underlying structural elements.

Last but not least, Eluard purchased from Max Ernst a fairly large painting, Éléphant Célèbes (fig. 29), which was hanging in the painter's studio. Nearly all Ernst's specialists note that this work marks a clear break with the painter's earlier style. Unfortunately, its date cannot be determined as precisely as that of the painted version of La préparation de la colle d'os, viewed by Werner Spies as "the" turning point for Ernst's ulterior development.

Préparation de la colle d'os started as a small collage -- a "collage total" in Spies' words, that is, an image in which constitutive elements cannot be isolated and where no process of transformation is involved. It was first reproduced in its actual size on the front page of "Dada au grand air" (fig. 27). Eventually Ernst painted an enlarged version of it (fig. 28), that he described in a letter to Tzara dated October 8, 1921:

"... J'ai réalisé un agrandissement très précis de la 'préparation de la colle d'os' (70 cm x 110 cm) à la peinture
à l'huile sur toile. Le tableau est très coloré et produit naturellement un effet encore plus fou que la petite reproduction.\(^8\)

This work was thus painted between September 27 (Ernst and Lou had left Tarrenz on the 26) and October 8. That Préparation de la colle d'os is the only securely dated painting among the ones made by Ernst after the summer in the Tyrol is incontestable; that it demonstrates Ernst's return to painting after an entire year devoted to collage is undeniable. But there also exists Éléphant Célèbes, purchased by Eluard during the first week of November, which could have been painted concurrently with Préparation de la colle d'os.\(^8\)

Moreover, the process used in Éléphant Célèbes, that is, the conversion of a visual collage into a painting, is more crucial to an understanding of Ernst's later development than the simple enlargement in oil on canvas of a preexisting collage. This is why the significance of Éléphant Célèbes goes beyond that of Préparation de la colle d'os. As early as 1969, Roland Penrose unveiled the secret of the ominous central figure in Éléphant Célèbes (fig. 29). Max Ernst had simply borrowed the form of his singular monolithic creature from an ethnographic photograph depicting a corn-bin from southern Sudan (fig. 30).\(^8\) But, when transposed in a different medium, blown up to the dimension of an easel painting, and enriched with a great number of smaller alien forms, the initial image -- which for Ernst worked as a catalyst -- was not easily recognizable.

A game of hide-and-seek, Éléphant Célèbes announced not only Oedipus Rex (fig. 108), which Eluard bought a few months later,\(^9\) but the series of paintings done by Ernst in a very similar manner between 1922 and 1924, and to which, as we will see very clearly, the Eaubonne cycle also belongs.
After the departure of the Eluards, Ernst wrote to Tzara: "Les deux Eluard partis, les deux Ernst sont tombés en enfance [...] Ils ont laissé une tristesse progressive par leur départ." But Paul and Gala were soon to come back. A real collaboration was planned for the coming spring. Répétitions, largely assembled from old or earlier poems, had been illustrated by collages composed by Ernst before he had read the poems. This time poet and painter wanted to work together from the very beginning in a genuine collaborative effort. As early as 1919, Breton and Soupault had experimented with collaborative and automatic writing in composing Les Champs Magnétiques. Ernst and Eluard also wrote together, but with this major difference: automatism seems to have been given little or no room.

In March 1922, Paul and Gala were in Cologne. By the end of June Les Malheurs des Immortels, révélés par Paul Eluard et Max Ernst was written, illustrated and even printed in Tyrol, where the two couples decided to vacation together. No manuscript, few documents and one or two confusing dates are all that is left to decipher twenty collages, created as visual counterparts for twenty poems written in common by the two young men. According to Werner Spies, Les Malheurs resembles in spirit the Fatagaga collages more than the Champs magnétiques:

"Au cours d'un processus d'élaboration commun, les collages et les textes sont mis en corrélation les uns avec les autres. En fait, le travail collectif qui avait commencé par la collaboration avec Hans Arp pour la série "Fatagaga" trouvait ici une extension. Eluard ne participa en rien aux collages, mais Ernst prit part à la rédaction des textes ... A la différence des Champs Magnétiques, l'œuvre commune de Breton et Soupault qui rédigèrent tout ensemble, le travail s'effectua ici le plus souvent à distance." Our purpose here is not to study these works either separately or as a unit, but rather to place them in their historical and biographical context, which was rather perturbed. Matthew Josephson, in his memoirs, has captured something of the drama and tension which reigned in Imst that summer of 1922:
5. Tyrol, summer 1922,
From left to right: Lou, Paul, Cécile Eluard,
Gala, Max and his son, Jimmy.
"The impassioned friendship between Paul Eluard and Max had, in truth, an unexpected side effect after they arranged to spend the summer together in 1922. A powerful electromagnetic current sprang up between the handsome Max and the high powered Gala Eluard with the consequence that Max separated from his wife and child, and moved into the Eluards quarters right next door to his own [...] Paul Eluard treated the business of their ménage à trois lightly enough, saying with a brave grin: 'Well, I love Max Ernst much more than I do Gala' [...]"

Moreover because of the 'emancipated' view of the persons involved, this love affair of Gala and Max ... proceeded openly and stormily, becoming quite a drama in the heavy Russian style — hence somewhat wearisome for the rest of the company."94

By the end of the summer, Lou and Jimmy Ernst were back in Cologne and Max, using Eluard's passport, had illicitly entered France, responding perhaps to Breton's exhortation "Lâchez tout" issued a few months earlier,95 but more surely under the spell of Gala.

A warm welcome awaited Ernst at Saint-Brice, Paul and Gala's present home, where he was given love, friendship and shelter. But those were hard times for young artists in Paris, and to make a living he had to accept various small jobs; he could paint only on Sundays:

"Il peint quand il peut, le dimanche. Paul Eluard le soutient autant que possible, en lui achetant des tableaux. Max vivra chez lui, à Saint-Brice et à Éaubonne, pendant plus d'un an et demi. Ils prennent leur train de banlieue chaque matin ensemble. Paul pour se rendre au bureau de son père, Max pour rejoindre les ateliers de sa camarote."96

But at least, he was part of the Parisian intelligensia and shared a way of life he had been dreaming of for the three previous years.

Breton, Eluard and all their friends were, during that fall of 1922, experimenting in new directions. Hypnosis and spiritualist initiation, psychodramas and transcriptions of dreams were the favorite activities of the moment. "L'entrée des médiums," a text published by
Breton in *Littérature* in November, set the tone. But in fact, since mid-September, the group had been holding regular meetings in which one or several participants put himself to sleep, and while asleep, was asked by the others all kinds of questions ranging from the bizarre to the simple in a sometimes cruel "jeu de la vérité." Answers given by the "dormeurs" were by turn frightening and exhilarating, but as noted by almost all participants, the dominant feeling was that of anguish. Evoking the climate of those sessions, Simone Breton wrote:

"Nous vivons en même temps le présent, le passé et l'avenir. Après chaque séance on est tellement égaré et brisé qu'on se promet de ne pas recommencer, et le lendemain, on n'a plus que le désir de se retrouver dans cette atmosphère catastrophique où tous se donnent la main avec angoisse."  

The poet Robert Desnos, who had joined the Dadaists in 1921, and the handsome René Crevel, a new member of the group, were the most constant "sleepers." Eluard, Gala and Max attended most of these sessions. They never "slept," but often were the focus of the phenomenon, either asking questions or drawing upon themselves the hatred of some "ambassador of the beyond." According to Marguerite Bonnet, those sessions -- often referred to collectively as "Les Sommeils" -- were held essentially from mid-September 1922 to the end of the winter, with a peak between mid-October and mid-December. Most of them took place at Breton's home, but the group also met at the residence of Marie de la Hure's, a friend of Picabia, and at the Eluard's house. Breton, years later, recalled that famous evening in Saint-Brice where Desnos, asleep, tried to kill Eluard:

"Une autre fois, après un dîner chez Eluard dans la banlieue de Paris, nous dûmes, à plusieurs, maîtriser Desnos endormi qui, brandissant un couteau, poursuivait Eluard dans le jardin."  

Matthew Josephson, who came to Paris in early spring of 1923, gave also a precious account of one of his visits to the Eluard's:
6. Max Ernst, Au rendez-vous des amis

Paris, December 1922,
oil on canvas, 129.5 x 193 cm.

From left to right, front row: René Crevel, Max Ernst, Dostoyevsky, Dr. Fraenckel, Paulhan, Benjamin Péret, Baargeld and Desnos; second row: Soupault, Arp, Max Morise, Raphael, Paul Eluard, Aragon, André Breton, Giorgio di Chirico, Gala Eluard.
"Aragon gave us warm welcome at the station and informed us that we were to dine quickly and accompany him to Paul Eluard's house where there was to be a seance of psychoanalysis among our friends, each of whom would recite his dreams and submit to being analyzed by the others [...]"

Here again was the trio we had found so diverting in Imst-in-Tyrol the summer before: Paul and Gala Eluard and Max Ernst [...] On one of the walls of Eluard's parlor a large group portrait by Ernst has been recently hung which represented all the members of the circle present that evening."

Habitués of these meetings, with a few exceptions and some additions, had indeed been portrayed together by Ernst in his famous Au rendez-vous des amis (p. 35) painted in December 1922. Crevel, Soupault, Arp, Aragon, Max Morise, André Breton, Desnos, Péret, Paulhan and Fraenkel, all members of the usual crowd gathered in Saint-Brice, had joined the trio Max-Paul-Gala. Although there were several other female participants in the spiritualist sessions, Gala is the only woman included in the picture. A few odd guests -- Baargeld, Raphael Sanzio, Giorgio de Chirico and Dostoyevsky -- complete this group portrait that Eluard will compare to the "célèbre Coin de Table de Fantin-Latour."

After the fever and the agitation of Dada in 1921 and 1922, the year 1923 seems, in retrospect, incredibly quiet -- even dull -- and somewhat confusing. Littérature kept going but at a slower pace and without Philippe Soupault, who withdrew from the group. He was replaced for a while by Francis Picabia who eventually designed several covers for the review and wrote many articles. This was a time of rupture; "l'action collective est sans but," diagnoses Marguerite Bonnet. Discouragement, apparent lack of curiosity and numbing of the imagination are the characteristics of this period, referred to by some art historians and literary critics as "l'époque floue." This was actually the "quiet before the storm" -- or before the revolution.
7. Max Ernst, Portrait of Gala, ca. 1924, oil on glass, 20.5 x 12.5 cm.
For the trio in Saint-Brice, things were now a bit different. A new attempt at collaboration began, "Et suivant votre cas, La série des jeunes femmes" (figs. 31-32), but was quickly abandoned. In terms of inventiveness, it was far from equaling Répétitions or Les Malheurs des Immortels and Eluard sank into apparent silence, interrupted only by scattered publications in Littérature and Feuilles libres, while Ernst entered one of the richest and most prolific years of his career. "L'approfondissement visionnaire de l'art du peintre et du poète se produit maintenant en parallèle plutôt qu'en collaboration, même si la muse est commune," noted J.C. Gateau.

The move to Eaubonne in the spring and a trip to Rome during the following winter seem to be the only two really prominent events in Eluard's life for the year 1923. Gala accompanied Paul to Italy, probably around December 1923-January 1924 while the second Roman Biennale was open. Eighteen works by Chirico were included in the show. Paul and Gala met the Italian painter and purchased several of his paintings tentatively identified by Gateau as Le petit intérieur métaphysique (1917), Le grand intérieur métaphysique of the same date, a large drawing Le poète et le philosophe, several pages of sketches dated 1913 and also some manuscripts from 1911 to 1915. Commenting on the general mood of the trip, Gateau also wrote:

"Ruines, neige et Chirico. Et un amour qui se déchire. Max Ernst est resté à Paris, et le tête-à-tête avec une Gala taciturne est loin d'être réconfortant [...] Si Eluard trouve, pour négocier, le sens des devoirs amicaux [he was also buying at the request of André Breton] et une efficacité souriante qui vient de son père, l'expérience douloureuse de sa vie avec Gala le plonge parfois dans des absences mélan-coliques."

In contrast, there were no traces of melancholia in Ernst's works done during the same period, rather feelings of introspection (Pietà ou la Révolution la nuit, fig. 33), of bondage (La femme chancelante, fig. 13 and Long Live Love, also called Pays Charmant, fig. 34) and of
sexual interrogation or discomfort (Les Hommes n'en sauront rien, fig. 129; Castor et Pollution, fig. 224). An obvious joy in painting links these works in which Ernst explored all the consequences of Eléphant Célèbes. The results of Ernst's latest production were shown at the Salon des Indépendants in February 1923. Writing about Ernst's contributions to the show, Eluard prophesizes:

"L'Eléphant de Célèbes, l'Intérieur de la vue et Oedipus Rex resteront parmi les manifestations les plus gratifiantes et les plus étonnantes d'un esprit que d'autres générations définiront."

But the most interesting commentary on Ernst's contemporary work remains Aragon's long unpublished article, which he himself dated from March or early April 1923:

"Progressivement la peinture de Max Ernst se simplifia et aux Indépendants de Paris 1923 on put voir les premiers spécimens de sa manière noire (1922-1923) qui est peut-être la plus surprenante [...] Ce sont à l'Intérieur de la vue représentant des vases de cristal qui ne semblent rien présenter d'anormal, mais observez-les: les fleurs y sont mises à l'envers, la tige en l'air, les corolles dans les vases" [...]

Puis Max Ernst fit de grandes aquarelles. Certaines participent encore de la manière noire. Ce sont des paysages apocalyptiques, des lieux jamais vus, des divinations [...] C'est par ces aquarelles, par quelques tableaux dont le décor participe à l'atmosphère de ces aquarelles, où le ciel est encore noir mais vers l'horizon se dégrade, qu'on arrive à la manière actuelle d'Ernst. Il serait sans doute prématuré de parler ici des grandes compositions que peint aujourd'hui Max Ernst (La honte de la Révolution, La Belle Jardinière, Sainte-Cécile, etc.). Elles n'ont pas encore été livrées au public. Il est de toute évidence que celui-ci sera choqué dans son goût péniblement acquis depuis le début du siécle. Il est évident que rien n'y flattera le snobisme, que rien n'y retiendra ceux qui ne demandent à un peintre que le vain attrait de la décoration. Rien de moins décoratif que Max Ernst [...]"
But starting in May 1923, Max Ernst was to add that category of "décoration" to his art. When he wrote his article Aragon did not know that Max Ernst was undertaking for the Eluards the decoration of their new house in Eaubonne. Yet, his judgement about Ernst's "no-decorativeness" quality remains valid, for the wall paintings of Eaubonne share all the characteristics of the other works done by the painter during this period. Although painted on plaster instead of canvas, the Eaubonne cycle cannot be dissociated from the rest of Ernst's oeuvre. These murals go beyond mere decoration; they are the outcome of Ernst's previous endeavors, but on a monumental scale (see Chapter IV).

Saint-Brice was only a rented house. Eaubonne was to be a real home. The three friends and the little Cécile — Paul and Gala's daughter, born in 1918 — moved to the new quarters in the spring of 1923. Not much is known about the life in Eaubonne. Patrick Waldberg, referring to this period of cohabitation, wrote:

"La vie chez Eluard s'écoule tantôt légère, tantôt grave. Max Ernst et lui ont su perfectionner un art de vivre qui leur sera souvent envié, faisant alterner selon un rythme naturel le recueillement et la licence, la méditation et la fête."

But of that period, very few witnesses remain to testify to such an idyllic vision.

One can imagine that, after the lively sessions in Saint-Brice, Eaubonne must have been a sort of retreat, albeit a forced one perhaps, because of the extensive work undertaken by Ernst. Comparing Ernst to the Baroque fresco painters, Waldberg writes: "un jour, Max Ernst entreprend de couvrir de peintures l'intérieur de la maison, comme, dans le passé, l'avait fait Francesco del Cossa au Palais Schifanoia pour le Prince d'Este à Ferrare. Salon, chambres, salle de bains, plafond, tout y passa, même les portes, et la maison D'Eluard fut en quelques mois transformée en écran de rêve." As he himself con-
fessed, Ernst could only paint on Sundays. The house must have been thus in great disorder for several months, and therefore not really suitable for large gatherings. Anyway, the mood was not conducive to cherry crowds. The rest of the clan was, as observed above, in a state of philosophical disarray and morose contemplation. "L'avenir aujourd'hui m'est plus obscur que jamais ..." avowed Aragon. Breton himself considered stopping writing and tried to convince some of his friends to do so, among them Desnos and Eluard. Doubt was in fashion, indicating a profound crisis among the members of the group.

For Eluard, this crisis had also intimate overtones. In a poem entitled "Nudité de la vérité," which was published in Littérature in October 1923, he confessed:

"Le désespoir n'a pas d'ailes,
L'amour non plus,
Pas de visage,
Ne parlent pas,
Je ne bouge pas,
Je ne les regarde pas,
Je ne leur parle pas.
Mais je suis bien aussi vivant que mon amour
et que mon désespoir."

Despite or because of Gala and Max's everpresence, Eluard's despair and solitude were serious. Acting as if it were his poetic will, Eluard sent to the printer the manuscript of a collection of his recent writings, Mourir de ne pas mourir, and with a viaticum in his pocket -- an important amount of money that his father had asked him to deposit in the bank -- vanished on March 24, 1924.

Speculations of all kinds have been raised to explain this flight, this "voyage idiot," as the poet himself, later in his life, referred to the episode. Was it a romantic gesture? A disappearance "à la Rimbaud"? A personal quest? Disgust with himself? An unacceptable contradiction between everyday life and higher aspirations?
8. Max Ernst, Portrait of Paul Eluard,
    ca. 1923-1924,
    oil on wood, 22.3 x 14.3 cm.
it was all of these. An important gambling loss, coupled with the
discovery by Mr. and Mrs. Grindel of Ernst's menage in Eaubonne, may
also have played a part in Eluard's decision. Whatever the reason is,
Eluard's disarray was profound.

Marseilles, Panama, Tahiti, the Far East. On the road, somewhere
Eluard felt the need to call on Gala and Max. To pay for the cost of
her trip, Gala decided to auction part of Paul's art collection.
Ernst, too, had to sell his entire atelier as he later recounted: "Il
vend à bas prix les oeuvres de ses années parisiennes à la Mère Ey de
Dusseldorf [...], puis il s'embarque pour l'Indochine, grâce à un
passeport au nom de Gondolier fourni par Robert Desnos [...]. Rendez-
vous avec Paul et Gala Eluard à Saigon. Là, Max Ernst persuade Eluard
de renoncer à son projet de 'disparaître à jamais' [...]."

By September 1924, Paul and Gala were back in Paris without Ernst.
Their friend trailed behind in Indochina for a few more months. When
eventually he reached Paris at the end of the year, the Manifeste du
Surréalisme had been launched by Breton and his apostles.

Life was never the same in Eaubonne after that erratic trip.
According to J.C. Gateau: "La cohabitation a définitivement cessé. A
son retour Ernst installera son atelier rue Tourlaque, près de Miró et
de Jean Arp." Eluard's poems, written after his own return, reflect
the retrieved intimacy with Gala, but an intimacy now viewed with more
lucidity by the poet. "Et si je suis à d'autres, souviens toi .... Je
hais l'amour j'aime Gala," wrote Eluard in 1925 in a confidential
publication of poems entitled Au défaut du silence. Images of Gala
by Ernst (fig. 35-36) alternate with texts by Eluard, which are at once
a tribute to love and to friendship. A year later came Capitale de la
douleur in which was included "Max Ernst," a new poem dedicated by
Eluard to his friend, the first verse of which reads:
"Dévoré par les plumes et soumis à la mer,  
Il a laissé passer son ombre dans le vol  
Des oiseaux de la liberté.  
Il a laissé  
La rampe à ceux qui tombent sous la pluie,  
Il a laissé leur toit à tous ceux qui se vérifient."  

The last line is a thinly disguised allusion to Ernst's stay in Indochina, while Paul and Gala sailed home and settled back in Eaubonne without their friend.

Despite estrangement and separation, despite distance and the diverging directions eventually taken by Ernst and Eluard, their friendship did survive the passing of time. Born of an exceptional encounter, nourished by a common taste for the arts and the love for the same inspiring Muse, it is an extraordinary relationship to be remembered when looking at some of the works it inspired -- among which the Eaubonne cycle certainly comes foremost.
Chapter I
NOTES

1. The young Grindel used for the first time the signature "Paul Eluard" on a letter dated November 6, 1914 that he sent to his friend and thoughtful advisor, the binder and old book dealer A.J. Gonon. It was subsequently used in his correspondence with him (Paul Eluard, Lettres de Jeunesse, Robert Valette, ed., Paris, Seghers, 1962, p. 37 and passim). But only in 1916 did Grindel officially endorse the pseudonym borrowed from his maternal grandmother's name. In August of that year, he published a short collection of poems dealing with war time, Le Devoir. The thin booklet was handcopied and signed "Paul Eluard."

2. A sudden haemoptysis in the summer of 1912 forced Eluard to interrupt school. He was sent to Switzerland where he spent several months in a sanatorium. There he met a young Russian patient, Hélène Dimitrovne Diakonova, whom he was to immortalize under the name of "Gala."

Not only love, but time devoted to reverie and readings during those months of seclusion were to have a permanent influence on Eluard. A recluse against his will, he came to like painting and painters through book collecting: "Ecarté par sa maladie des salons et des expositions, c'est par le biais de la bibliophilie qu'il s'approcha d'abord de la peinture. Reclus vué aux longues siestes et collectionneur dans l'âme, il entreprend amoureusement de constituer une bibliothèque, trésor de culture et placement estimable aux yeux de ses parent" (J.C. Gateau, Paul Eluard et la peinture surréaliste, Genève, Droz, 1982, p. 19).
3. The death, in January 1906, of a beloved pink cockatoo the very same day his sister Loni was born, is reported by Ernst as more than a disquieting event in his young life:

"One of his best friends, a most intelligent and affectionate pink cockatoo, died in the night of January 5th. It was an awful shock to Max when he found the corpse in the morning and when, at the same moment, his father announced to him the birth of sister Loni. The perturbation of the youth was so enormous that he fainted. In his imagination he connected both events and charged the baby with the extortion of the bird's life. A series of mystical crisis, fits of hysteria, exaltations and depressions followed" ("Some data on the youth of M.E. as told by himself," View, special issue on Max Ernst, Series II, n° 1, April 1962, p. 30).

This event has been given legendary dimension ever since in all comprehensive biographies of the painter (See, for instance, Patrick Waldberg, Max Ernst, Paris, J.J. Pauvert, 1958, pp. 41-42, or John Russel, Max Ernst, Life and Work, New York, Abrams, 1967, p. 16). As noted by Diane Waldman, there was always a tendency on the part of the Surrealists to emphasize "the fantastic aspects of their lives." This is why, according to her, "Ernst, in the Surrealist fashion, cultivated his numerous nervous crises as an integral part of his creative experience" (Introductory text to Max Ernst, a retrospective, The Salomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, 1975, p. 16).

4. Few works remain from this early period. Two landscapes dated 1909 show the strong influence of Van Gogh. In 1911, Ernst met August Macke who introduced him to Delaunay's works. Writing about this period of his life, Max Ernst stated: "Attracted by the most audacious spirit, he was willing to receive the most contradictory influence -- in painting for example, Manet, Gauguin, Van Gogh, Goya, Macke, Kandinsky, Deaunay and so forth" ("An informal life of M.E. as told by himself to a young friend,"
The Museum of Modern Art, New York, Max Ernst, 1961, p. 9). A year later (1912), Ernst joined Das Junge Rheinland, "a group of friends, poets and painters stimulated to a great extent by Macke ... [and] united by a thirst for life, poetry, liberty, the absolute and knowledge" (Ibid.). Ernst's first exhibitions were held under the auspices of Das Junge Rheinland in Bonn (1912), Cologne (1913) and later in Berlin.

5. In December 1913 thirty copies of Premiers Poèmes were printed which Eluard later destroyed. In 1914 he published -- still under the name of Grindel -- Dialogues des Inutiles. Both of these booklets were composed while the young poet was convalescent in Switzerland.

6. Paul Eluard married his beloved Gala in February 1917; their daughter, Cécile, was born in May 1918. Ernst's wife, Lou Strauss, was an art historian that he had met at the University of Bonn where they were attending the same life drawing class. Their marriage took place in 1918. Their son, Ulrich -- nicknamed Jimmy -- was born in 1920.

7. First called up in the infantry, Max Ernst spent most of the war in an artillery regiment where he managed to be transferred. A photograph (reproduced in Edward Quinn, Max Ernst New York, New York Graphic Society, 1977, p. 44, right) shows his head and left hand bandaged. As for Eluard, he joined the front line in 1916 where he was attached to a hospital:

"... Les blessés, les éclipsés forment un monde à part, silencieux, que l'on reçoit à peine et que l'on fiche dehors aussitôt [...] Les autres blessés, ceux que l'on ne peut évacuer, sont opérés à l'ambulance chirurgicale qui est avec nous. Plusieurs meurent chaque jour et on a vite fait, je vous assure, de les mettre en terre ..." (Paul Eluard to A.J. Gonon, August 10, 1916, in Lettres de Jeunesse pp. 112-113).

9. "On the first of August 1914, Max Ernst died. He was resurrected on the eleventh of November 1918 as a young man who aspired to find the myths of his time" (Max Ernst, "An informal life of M.E. as told by himself to a young friend," 1961, p. 10).


11. Issue n° 8 of 391 was published in Zurich in February 1919. The same year, Picabia also collaborated with those involved in the Zurich-based magazine Dada. Anthology Dada n° 4-5 was published in May (See William A. Camfield, Francis Picabia, His Art, Life, and Times, Princeton, N.J., Princeton University Press, 1979, pp. 118-119).

12. But, as Diane Waldman noticed: "Ernst, unlike Picabia, finds it necessary to humanize the visual aspect of the composition to the extent that it becomes a whimsical play on love rather than a determined effort to undermine human couplings in favor of the machine" (Max Ernst, a retrospective, 1975, p. 25).


15. It was in the shop of the printing company, Hertz, Muhlenbach 38, in Cologne, that Ernst discovered some of the material used in his graphic works. Ernst and Baargeld had commissioned this company
to print several Dada posters. Eventually, Hertz printed Bulletin D and Die Schamade-Dadameter, two subsequent publications launched by the two friends (See Werner Spies, Max Ernst: Les collages, inventaire et contradictions, Paris, Gallimard, 1984, p. 40).


17. Spies, Max Ernst: Les collages, p. 29.

18. Max Ernst, "Inspiration to Order," This Quarter, vol. V, n° 1, Surrealist number 1932, pp. 79-85, as quoted by Werner Spies, ibid.

19. Le Surréalisme au Service de la Révolution, n° 6, 15 mai 1933, pp. 43-45.


21. Max Ernst, Beyond Painting, p. 18.

22. André Breton, in the "First Surrealist Manifesto" (1924), defined Surrealism as "pure psychic automatism by which one intends to express verbally, in writing or by other method, the real functioning of the mind." Pure psychic automatism was subsequently described as a "dictation by thought, in the absence of any control exercised by reason, and beyond any esthetic or moral preoccupation." The comparison between Ernst's account of his discovery of collage, and Breton's own discovery of automatic writing is interesting. Breton wrote in Manifeste du Surréalisme:
"It was in 1919 that my attention was fastened upon the more or less partial phrases that in utter solitude, as sleep approached, became perceptible to the mind without its being possible to discover in them (without a rather elaborate analysis), a previous determination. One evening in particular, before falling asleep, I perceived distinctly articulated -- so that it was impossible to change a word -- but absent nonetheless from the sound of any voice, a rather strange phrase that came to me without bearing a trace of the events with which, by admission of my consciousness, I happened to be concerned at that moment, a phrase that seemed insistent, a phase, I should say, that knocked at the window [...] I realized that I was dealing with an image of a rather rare type which I decided to incorporate into my stock of poetic constructions" (Excerpts of Manifeste du Surréalisme, 1924, as translated by Richard Howard, in Maurice Nadeau, The History of Surrealism, New York, Mac Millan, 1965, p. 81).

Ernst's account, written a little less than ten years after Breton's manifesto, owes a great deal to this influential text.

23. Ernst's new method had nothing in common with the collage Kurt Schwitters was making at the same time in Hanover. "Anything at hand," for Schwitters, meant discarded papers, ragged fabrics, things found in the wastebasket or on the sidewalks. Pasted together, these down-to-earth materials were more statements about society than images of a surprising and poetic new reality.


27. Le Rossignol Chinois is a good example of another source material used by Ernst. More than a collage, Le Rossignol is a photomontage. Heterogeneous elements all borrowed from preexisting photographs have been brought together on the same plane. Spies has noted that photographic material could be borrowed either from original prints or from pictures cut out from magazines (See Max Ernst: Les collages, p. 73).

28. Un peu malade le cheval exists in two versions. Both come from a print of an earlier collage and make use of similar anatomical elements but, when studied carefully, reveal important variations (See Werner Spies, Max Ernst: Les collages, p. 60). The mixture of mechanical and biomorphic fragments has given birth to a new fascinating image of the horse.


30. Ibid.


34. Die Schammade was a single publication. Apart from Ernst and Baargeld, several foreign artists contributed to the review, among
them Breton, Eluard and Aragon. Thanks to Tristan Tzara who acted as a liaison man, a correspondence between Cologne and Paris had been established, as demonstrated by a letter sent by Ernst to Tzara on February 2, 1920:

"Cher Tristan Tzara,
S'il vous plaît envoyez-moi
tout de suite
les contributions de Ribemont-Dessaigne, Soupault, Breton, Aragon et Eluard. Nous leur réservons 4 ou 5 pages (format du bulletin D) de la Schammode. Les articles devraient être ici au plus tard le 29 février ou le premier mars. Si c'est impossible, écrivez-moi par retour, je vous prie [...]"

Votre, Max Ernst"

(Fonds Tzara, Bibliothèque Littéraire Doucet, Paris).


37. Referring to Ernst's photo-montage Laocoön once exhibited under Arp's name, Arp wrote: "Overcome by an irresistible longing for snakes, I created a project of reformed rattle-snakes, beside which the insufferable rattle-snake of the firm Laocoön & Sons is a mere worm. At the very same moment, Max Ernst created Fata. My reformed rattlesnake firm and Max Ernst's Fata firm merge under the name of Fatagaga and can be brought to life at any time on request" (Hans Arp, "Looking," in Arp, Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1958, p. 13).


40. "Témoignage de sympathie du groupe parisien Dada" Ernst will write later. "André Breton a rédigé la lettre. C'est une proposition d'exposer à Paris les collages de Max Ernst. Max Ernst qui a lu les Champs Magnétiques, accepte ravi. Le geste fraternel et courageux de Breton va décider peut-être de son avenir -- courageux, car il fallait de l'aplomb pour présenter alors en France un peintre allemand" (*Ecritures*, p. 42). In fact, as pointed out by J.C. Gateau (*Bluard et la peinture surréaliste*, p. 47, note 8), the invitation had been suggested by Ernst himself who, on December 28, 1920 wrote to Tzara: "Voulez-vous faire une exposition de mes travaux graphiques? Je vous en enverrai 30-60, si vous voulez" (Fonds Tzara, Bibliothèque Littéraire Doucet, Paris).

41. *Littérature* was founded between January and March 1919 by the "three musketeers" André Breton, Philippe Soupault and Louis Aragon. Started as a "revue de bonne compagnie" (Breton, *Entretiens*, André Parinaud, ed., Paris, Gallimard, 1952, p. 46), that is, a rather traditional review bridging the old and the new generation of poets, *Littérature* became an instrument of rupture with the past. *Les Champs Magnétiques* was published in several issues starting in October 1919 ("Dans ses numéros d'octobre à décembre 1919, Littérature publie, sous ma signature et celle de Soupault, les trois premiers chapitres des Champs Magnétiques ... il est le fruit des premières applications systématiques de l'écriture automatique," Breton, *Entretiens*, p. 56). In May 1920, an entire issue was devoted to the publication of "Vingt-trois
manifestes Dada," but despite the corrosive content of some of the texts, the overall layout of that issue remained very traditional.

42. For the account of Breton and Eluard's first encounter, see Breton, Nadja, Paris, Gallimard, 1928, p. 32. Philippe Soupault relates in his memoirs how he first met Eluard:

"Un jour d'avril 1919, nous préparions le sommaire du deuxième numéro de Littérature, on frappa discrètement à la porte. C'était un dimanche. Breton, assez inquiet, ouvrit sa porte. Nous vimes s'avancer, très timidement, un grand garçon en uniforme d'officier ... 'C'est Jean Paulhan, nous dit-il, qui m'envoie vers vous ... Je m'appelle Eugène Grindef mais je signe Eluard'. Breton fut immédiatement séduit par cet homme dont la timidité et la modestie lui plaisaient. Avant de nous quitter, toujours très intimidé, Eugène Grindef nous confia un cahier, un recueil de poèmes dont le titre nous parut singulier: Les Animaux et leurs Hommes. Ce n'est que quelques jours plus tard, et après maintes réflexions, que nous choisismes une des poèmes, 'Vache', pour le publier dans le troisième numéro de Littérature" (Mémoires de l'Oubli, 1914-1923, Paris, Lachenal & Ritter, 1981, pp. 98-99).

43. Proverbe, no 1, Février 1920, p. 1.

44. See, for instance, some of Arp's poems written in Switzerland around 1918 and 1919, in Arp, On my way, New York, Wittenborn, Schultz, 1949.

45. Ernst several times asked Tristan Tzara to send him "little words" or "very short poems" for publication in various reviews in Cologne. See, for example, his letter to Tzara, dated 2.11.20:

"Je fais en ce moment un numéro 'méchanogramme'. C'est un croisement de lithographies et de dessins et de mots mécaniques. S'il vous fait plaisir d'y collaborer, envoyez-moi s.v.p. des petits mots ou des tous petits poèmes de vous ..." (Fonds Tzara, Bibliothèque Littéraire Doucet, Paris).
46. "Comme Breton, il [Eluard] restait fidèle à Mallarmé et à Valéry, les stylistes [...]. Mais surtout c'était le même travail de recherche fondamentale sur les éléments premiers de l'acte créateur, de remontée aux sources de l'expression, que celui auquel se livrait, dans le secret de son atelier newyorkais, le peintre Marcel Duchamp [...]. Proverbe, comme les notes de la Mariée, appelait l'attention, dans l'article liminaire du premier numéro signé de Jean Paulhan, sur le fait que 'les mots s'usent à force de servir, et quand ils ont une fois réussi ne donnent plus beaucoup d'eux-mêmes' " (Sanouillet, Dada à Paris, Paris, J.J. Pauvert, 1965, p. 212).


49. Ibid., p. 32.

50. Ibid., pp. 31-33.

51. André Breton, "Genèse et perspective artistiques du Surréalisme," in Le Surréalisme et la Peinture, suivi de Genèse et perspective artistiques du Surréalisme, New York, Bretano's, 1945, pp. 90-91. This text was first published (translated into English) as a preface to the catalogue of Art of this Century (1941).

52. Soupault speaks here not of the works shown at Au Sans Pareil in May 1921, but of two other fairly large pieces (La bicyclette graminée and Paysage en ferraille) which Ernst exhibited a month later at the Salon Dada, organized by Tzara at the Galerie Montaigne (Mémoires de l'Oubli, p. 157).
53. See the account given by Hugnet, quoting the critic Esparbès, in The Dada Painters and Poets, pp. 179-180, or Sanouillet's lively description in Dada à Paris, pp. 249-251.

54. On this particular detail, see Marguerite Bonnet, André Breton et la naissance de l'aventure surréaliste, Paris, José Corti, 1975, p. 239, note 201.

55. Sanouillet wrote (Dada à Paris, p. 248), making a point concerning a letter from Breton to Derain, dated October 3, 1921:

"Sans mettre en doute la valeur de l'oeuvre du peintre allemand et l'intérêt que pouvait présenter pour Dada la défense publique d'un homme, leur parent par l'esprit [...], il convient sans doute de chercher ailleurs les raisons profondes qui poussèrent Breton et ses amis à ainsi se désavouer. Il semble bien que l'une d'entre elles fut le désir plus ou moins conscient de faire pièce à Picabia...."


57. "[Breton] a saisi d'emblée l'importance des collages [...] Ils échappent en effet à Dada: rompant sur un autre mode que le cubisme avec le code de la représentation, ils apparaissent comme une mise en oeuvre plastique de la métaphore maldororienne, en réalisant l'accouplement de deux réalités en apparence inaccompliables sur un plan qui en apparence ne leur convient pas" (Bonnet, André Breton et la naissance de l'aventure surréaliste, pp. 238-239).

58. Breton's preface to the exhibition catalogue, as translated in Beyond Painting, p. 22.

59. The mention "appartient à" followed by various easily recognizable initials appears nine times on the catalogue (See p. 22). Accord-
ing to Carlo Sala, these sales did not help Ernst's financial situation very greatly. Speaking of the year 1922, he wrote:

"Puisque plusieurs collages exposés 'Au Sans Pareil' avaient été achetés par ses amis auxquels il n'osa pas demander d'argent, il [Max Ernst] se résigne à accepter la modeste somme de 200 F que lui donna la galerie" (Max Ernst et la démarche onirique, Paris, Klincksieck, 1970, p. 43).

60. According to Michel Sanouillet, Eluard underwent minor surgery on April 28, 1921 (Dada à Paris, p. 309, note 3); his health may not have allowed him to be part of the event on May 2, at the Galerie "Au Sans Pareil."

61. These three works were offered for sale at the Hôtel Drouot on July 3, 1924 during the Vente Eluard (catalogue in the Fonds Eluard, Musée d'Art et d'Histoire de la Ville de Saint-Denis). Four others dating from the same years were sold by Paul Eluard to Roland Penrose in 1938 (manuscript letter, Fonds Eluard, Musée d'Art et d'Histoire de la Ville de Saint-Denis); they were Aquis submersus, 1919, Katharina ondulata, 1920, Le couple dans la ville, 1919 and L'ascaride de sable, 1920. The latter was included in the May 1921 show at Au Sans Pareil, but Eluard may have purchased it at a subsequent date from Ernst himself.


64. Concerning the Procès Barrès and Breton's position, see Marguerite Bonnet, André Breton et la naissance de l'aventure surréaliste, pp. 239-247.

66. According to Werner Spies, only their interest in Max Ernst can explain Breton's and Eluard's sudden migration to Tyrol (Max Ernst Les collages, p. 90). However, Breton himself says only: "Ceci dit, les vacances de 1921 qui nous réunissent Max Ernst, Tzara et moi au Tyrol semblent devoir provoquer une détente et pourtant, les hostilités véritables vont recommencer" (Entretiens, p. 69). Ernst, too, gave his own version of the story: "Rappel au sérieux par l'arrivée inattendue d'André Breton, en voyage de noces avec son épouse Simone ... Max, impatient de le connaître personnellement, était impressionné par sa 'présence' presque magique ... Tout allait bien tant qu'il lisait les Chants de Maldoror à haute voix. Mais la présence de Tristan Tzara l'agaçait visiblement ... Nos rapports se détérioraient rapidement. C'était la fin des vacances et réjouissances dans le Tyrol. Dada était menacé d'une crise" (Écritures, pp. 44-45).


68. Ibid.

69. "Max and Lou lived on the top floor of a four-story town house on Kaiser-Wilhelm Ring ... The living-room and the adjacent smaller studio became the hub for ... visiting artists, writers, critics and poets ... The most frequent visitors were Hans Arp and Sophie Tauber, Paul Klee, Jankel Adler, Lyonel Feiniger, Tristan Tzara and, staying for extended periods, Paul Eluard and his wife Gala" (Jimmy Ernst, A Not-So-Still-Life, New York, St. Martin's/Marek, 1984, pp. 16-17).

70. Patrick Waldberg, Max Ernst, p. 172.


73. John Russel, *Max Ernst, Life and Work*, p. 64.

74. *Ecritures*, p. 45.


76. Lou Strauss-Ernst, as quoted and translated by Jimmy Ernst in his own autobiography, *A Not-So-Still-Life*, p. 19:

"That Russian female ... that slithering, glittering creature with dark falling hair, vaguely oriental and luminant black eyes and small delicate bones, who had to remind one of a panther. This almost silent, avaricious woman, who having failed to entice her husband into an affair with me in order to get Max, finally decided to keep both men, with Eluard's loving consent."

77. In the letter dated November 7, 1921, sent by Paul Eluard to Tristan Tzara (Fonds Tzara, Bibliothèque Littéraire Doucet, Paris), four different hands are clearly recognizable:

"[Eluard]: Les charmes empoisonnés de la charmuse d'échelles au long du chemin vert et de la côte empoisonnée et la candeur des lions que nous mangeons avec Max Ernst et Rosa, celle-ci et celui-là plus avides que la domptuese. Nous dansons de tous les côtés, des petits rubans qui volent, les chiens ont peur. [Ernst]: Les trampolins nous ont quitté plus que 6 fois. Nous avons fait tomber de la pousière [sic] de nos veines dans des verres. Ich warne Sie. J'ai peint des lunettes dans la figure d'Eluard. Dès ce temps il s'appelle Eluard. Mme Eluard s'appelle l'équilibre. [Lou]: Tous les lions portent des lunettes aussi pour mieux voir Cornada [?], la baronne et ses amis."
P.S [Gala]: Si c'est grâce à vous que nous connaissons Ernst aujourd'hui, je vous en remercie beaucoup, beaucoup. Et puis venez.

Gala"

Werner Spies, who also quotes this letter in Max Ernst: Les collages, p. 111, but incompletely, does not mention the participation of Gala and Lou.

78. See Gateau, Paul Eluard et la peinture surréaliste, p. 53, note 38.


80. J.C. Gateau, Paul Eluard et la peinture surréaliste, p. 54 and 56.

81. Ibid., p. 53.

82. Two pictures taken late in Eluard's life show the painting hanging first above Eluard's desk in the apartment he shared, 45 rue de la Chapelle, with his second wife, Nusch, after World War II (See Raymond Jean, Eluard par lui même, Paris, Le Seuil, 1968, p. 52), and, later, in his last home, rue de Charenton where he settled with Dominique, his third wife, (See Album Eluard, Paris, Gallimard, 1967, p. 304).

84. Symptomatic of the shift in Ernst's source material is the request the painter made to Tzara in a letter sent from Cologne in early October 1921:

"Si vous trouvez de vieux catalogues de grands magasins et des revues de modes, de vieilles Illustrations, etc., envoyez-les moi s'il vous plait afin que j'améliore les réserves en matériau brut de Fatagaga..." (Fonds Tzara, Bibliothèque Littéraire Doucet, Paris).

85. Waldberg, Max Ernst, p. 166; Russel, Max Ernst, Life and Work, p. 64; Schneede, Max Ernst, p. 50; Carlo Sala, Max Ernst et la démarche onirique, p. 32-33; Roland Penrose, Max Ernst's Celebes (Text of 52nd Charlton Lecture, University of Newcastle upon Tyne, November 19, 1969), Newcastle upon Tyne, 1972, pp. 11.13.

86. Spies, Max Ernst: Les collages, p. 117.


88. In his letter to Tzara dated October 8, 1921, Ernst also added:

"J'ai beaucoup à faire en ce moment pour préparer mon exposition à Dusseldorf (ler-15 nov.) ...." 

This means that, besides Préparation de la colle d'os, Ernst could have painted several other works among which is Éléphant Célèbes.

89. Penrose, Max Ernst's Celebes, p. 15.

90. As for Éléphant Célèbes, the central image of Oedipus Rex is borrowed from an illustration in La Nature, a nineteenth century pseudo-scientific magazine (See Werner Spies, Max Ernst: Les collages, p. 122, and fig. 108-109 below).

92. Spies here makes reference to a conversation he had with Max Ernst on the making of Les Malheurs des Immortels (Max Ernst: Les collages, p. 111).


95. "Lâchez tout.
Lâchez Dada.
Lâchez votre femme, lâchez votre maîtresse.
Lâchez vos espérances et vos craintes.
Semez vos enfants au coin d'un bois.
Lâchez la proie pour l'ombre.
Lâchez au besoin une vie aisé, ce qu'on vous donne pour une situation d'avenir.
Partez sur les routes."

(André Breton, "Lâchez tout," Littérature, nouvelle série, 1er avril 1922, p. 10).

96. Max Ernst, Ecritures, p. 46.

97. Littérature, nouvelle série, no 6, 1er novembre 1922, pp. 1-16.

98. Letter of Simone Breton to her cousin Denise Naville, 9.9.1922, as quoted by Marguerite Bonnet, in André Breton et la naissance de l'aventure surréaliste, p. 265.
99. Ibid.

100. Concerning Ernst and the Eluards, see for example, Littérature, nouvelle série, n° 6, 1er novembre 1922, p. 9 (Desnos refers to Gala as "La Tour"), 10, and 12.

101. Marguerite Bonnet, André Breton et la naissance de l'aventure Surréaliste, p. 266.

102. Breton, Entretiens, p. 90.


The presence of Baargeld in Au rendez-vous des amis may be interpreted as a tribute paid by Ernst to his friend and to the "good old days" of Cologne. Giorgio de Chirico’s presence is understandable since in the early twenties the Italian painter was an influential figure for the group and, certainly, for Ernst, a recognized source of inspiration. Chirico’s effigy set on a marble column is reminiscent of the painter’s taste for classical architecture. The reference to Dostoyevsky is perhaps an homage to Gala’s Russian origin and to her taste for the writings of her countryman. As for Raphael, his inclusion in the group is often interpreted as a recognition on the part of Ernst of the artist who painted the School of Athens. Not only the School of Athens -- which appears to be a prototype for this sort of ideal gathering -- but also the Disputa copied with great application by Ernst’s father, may have been in Max Ernst’s mind when he painted Au rendez-vous des amis.

106. Bonnet, André Breton et la naissance de l'aventure surréaliste, p. 281.

107. Published in Littérature, nouvelle série, no 7, 1er décembre 1922, pp. 8-9.


109. Ibid., p. 97.

110. Ibid., p. 98.

111. "Au salon des Indépendants," see note 104.


113. Asked about Saint-Brice, Cécile Eluard said in a conversation on October 22, 1984:

"Ma grand mère habitait rue Ordener, dans le XVIIIème arrondissement. Ils (Paul and Gala) étaient dans la même maison au troisième étage, je crois, et ma grand-mère au premier. Ensuite, ils sont allés à Saint-Brice et j'ai toujours pensé que c'étaient pour des vacances ou pour quelques mois. Je ne crois même pas que c'était une maison qu'ils avaient achetée; je pense qu'elle était seulement louée."

114. See Chapter II, note 5.

116. Ibid.


118. On this particular aspect, see Marguerite Bonnet, p. 310.

119. _Littérature_, nouvelle série, n°s 11-12, 15 octobre 1923, p. 32.

120. See excerpts of a letter from Simone Breton to Denise Naville, dated March 27, 1924, according to which Eluard "jetant l'argent, ivre, ayant peur d'aller se coucher seul," was spending his nights drinking in the company of Noll and Aragon, in some "boîtes a champagne." As quoted by Marguerite Bonnet, p. 311.

121. According to Robert Valette, there was a direct and intense conflict between the commercial activities performed by Eluard in his father's business -- he was a real estate developer -- and his inner aspirations as a poet. See "Le fil de la tendresse humaine," _Europe_, November-December 1962, pp. 8-21.

122. Referring to a conversation he once had on this issue with Max Ernst, Patrick Waldberg mentioned this possibility. Interview, October 30, 1984.

123. On that possible explanation, see Valentine Hugo's Agenda, as quoted by J.C. Gateau, p. 88.

124. In a letter to Gala sent from Nice in June 1929 ( _Lettres à Gala_ 1924-1948, p. 69), Eluard evoked his departure in March 1924:
"C'est drôle, ces départs, ces séjours à Nice — l'Hôtel Alexandra est en face de l'Hôtel Beaulieu et de Hollande où j'ai été avant mon voyage il y a 5 ans. J'y ai pleuré, tellement pleuré il y a 5 ans ......

125. A catalogue announcing the auction for July 3, 1924, advertised: "Collection Eluard. Tableaux modernes, Aquarelles, Gouaches et Dessins. Bois Nègres" and gave the list of the works offered for sale. Among them were eight works by Ernst, twelve by Picasso, eight by Chirico, and three by Picabia (Fonds Eluard, Musée d'Art et d'Histoire de la Ville de Saint-Denis).

126. Écritures, p. 48.


128. Paul Eluard, Au défaut du silence, in Oeuvres Complètes, I, p. 167. When first published in 1925, the book Au défaut du silence bore no name either of author or of artist. Only fifty copies were printed; they were not distributed.


130. The publication of Paul Eluard's Lettres à Gala 1924-1948, (Paris, Gallimard, 1984) revealed an unsuspected event. On May 24, 1927, perhaps because of Gala — and in her absence — Max and Paul had a serious fight which left the poet with a black eye and a great deal of resentment against the painter (pp. 18-20). In subsequent letters, Eluard wrote: "Nous sommes fâchés à jamais ... Il faut oublier son [Max Ernst] existence" (May 29; p. 22) or "Nous sommes fâchés à mort, pour toujours" (June 1929; p. 3). But, obviously, the matter was settled within a year or so. On October 15, 1928, Paul sent to Max a copy of his new poems, Défense de savoir, with the following dedication:
"Mon cher Max,
rien, jamais,
n'effacera notre amitié

Paul Eluard"

(Paul Eluard, Oeuvres Complètes, II, p. 962).
Chapter II

THE HOUSE IN EAUBONNE:
DISCOVERY AND RECOVERY OF THE PAINTINGS;
RECONSTRUCTION OF THE CYCLE

Eaubonne today has lost the rural charm which must have attracted the Eluards in the early twenties. Despite the proximity of the forêt de Montmorency, busy highways and cheap housing developments have made of this charming small town just another northwestern suburb of Paris.¹ But, curiously enough, rue Hennocque has retained something of its former remoteness, of its secluded character. There, time has stopped. The narrow street -- once a private road ending in a cul-de-sac² -- is lined with fairly high walls. Behind them hide four or five houses surrounded by manicured gardens where lime-trees, wisterias and roses blossom immutably.

Bearing number "4" on a little plaque of blue enamel, Paul and Gala's house still stands, surprisingly massive beyond the wrought iron gate (fig. 38). As it appears in an old photograph,³ the same fence and brick piers enclose the garden (fig. 40); an identical slate roof tops the building and the same glass canopy protrudes over the main door (figs. 41-42) as it does in a charming 1938 watercolor.⁴ Well maintained by the present owner, the exterior walls display a fresh white rough-cast coating, and the mosaic elements which ornament the upper part of the two main facades still retain their brilliant colors (fig. 41).
9. The Eluard House, 1938, watercolor by J. Labourasse
The house was bought by Paul Eluard at the end of April 1923, with funds provided by his father. Originally built in the 1870's it badly needed repairs and improvements. Using a fairly large room, which was formerly a bedroom, Paul and Gala had a brand new bath installed on the premier étage next to their own bedroom. They might also have decided to enlarge one of the northern windows on the deuxième étage to allow more light into what became Ernst's atelier. On this level, a wide opening breaks the symmetry of the rear facade (fig. 43). It scarcely seems possible that these were the original plans for the building. More likely Paul Eluard must have decided to provide his friend Max Ernst with a well-lit working space. Modern features, as for instance, the metal work of the balcony, support this interpretation.

How the interior decoration project came to be conceived is not known. No commission has been found in Paul Eluard's papers. The estates of Max Ernst and Jimmy Ernst do not hold any information dealing with the genesis of the Èaubonne decoration; and, in the bulk of letters and family related documents inherited by Cécile Eluard after the death of Gala in 1982, not a single hint could be discovered.

A reasonable explanation would be that, grateful for the warm and friendly hospitality he received from the Eluards, Max Ernst spontaneously offered to repaint the house which surely must have needed it after the remodeling. He may at some point have decided to add wall decorations, unless the idea came from Eluard himself. Both Gala and Paul were very familiar with Ernst's recent production and fond enough of his art to give him the opportunity to undertake such an extensive program. The color scheme, as well as the choice of the main motifs, may have been discussed between the three friends. However, it is hard to imagine the Eluards imposing their color choices and themes on Max Ernst.
One fact is absolutely certain. The wall decoration was finished by mid-November 1923. André Breton in a letter dated November 11 to his wife Simone described at length his first visit to Eaubonne. The account of what he saw that day allows us to think that all the interior decoration had, by that time, already been completed. Breton even mentioned Ernst's project, not yet undertaken, to paint the exterior shutters. But it is not known if this was ever carried out.

Therefore, it took Ernst about six months -- from early May to early November 1923 -- to cover the house with bright colors. From cellar to attic each floor was given a dominant tonality: golden-ochre for the rez-de-chaussée; blue and water-green for the premier étage; red for the top floor. But colors were not enough. Ernst punctuated almost every room with figurative elements -- frescoes, frieze, decorated doors and ceiling motif -- making of Eaubonne a unique experience, a total environment which needs to be understood sequentially, that is floor after floor, and room after room as will be demonstrated.

Cécile Eluard was just five years old when her parents moved to Eaubonne in the spring of 1923. As nearly she can remember, she believes that she must have lived there until approximately 1928, but she has no memory of Max Ernst working on the house decoration. Nevertheless, some terrifying images haunted her for years and may be the reason that these murals were recovered. Speaking of the panel entitled Il ne faut pas voir la réalité telle que je suis, Cécile recalled:

"Certaines [fresques], dans mon souvenir, m'avaient paru effrayantes. Par exemple, cette femme avec le ventre rose, ouvert, j'en avais un souvenir terrifiant ..."

Without Cécile's memories, the whole decoration of Eaubonne could have disappeared -- ruined, mutilated, scratched by later residents. Some of its elements, as for instance the paintings in the master bath-
10. Max Ernst, Cécile Eluard, ca. 1925-1926, pencil on paper, 7.8 x 10.5 cm.
room on the premier étage, were totally lost when the house changed hands for the first time in 1932. More damage could have been done when the house was sold again in 1972. It is just fortunate that the Moraines, to whom Paul and Gala sold the house in 1932 decided not to paint over all the walls, but rather to conceal some of Ernst's imagery under a paper covering more to their taste. It is even more fortunate that Cécile and Robert Valette, her husband in the late 1960's, decided—with the consent of the Moraines—to have the still extant paintings quickly removed from their original support and transferred to canvas. But it took two books and nearly forty-five years to reach that end!

This recovery itself constitutes a rather amazing story: For many years Cécile talked about a house in which she lived when she was a little girl, a house painted by Max Ernst, but only in 1967 did she really undertake a search. That very same year, her husband published Eluard, Livre d'identité (Paris, Tchou), a sort of intimate album for which she had to gather all kinds of family-related documents and photographs. In a parallel direction, Gallimard was collecting information for a volume to be part of her father's "Oeuvre Complètes" (Album Eluard, La Pléiade). Memories long repressed were thus revived, memories of days when she was a little girl surrounded by huge frightening figures in a strange house which she never liked.

Time had come for a pilgrimage to Eaubonne. During the fall of 1967, Cécile and Robert, in the company of a common friend, the painter Roger Dérieux, drove the twenty kilometers which separate Paris from the rue Hennocque to discover that the house still belonged to the very same Moraines to whom Paul Eluard had sold it in 1932. Robert Valette had to give the Moraines some explanations:

"Nous leur avons expliqué ... qui était ce Monsieur Grindel à qui ils avaient acheté la maison en 1932. Ils savaient vaguement ce qu'était Eluard, mais ils n'avaient jamais fait le rapprochement. Et on leur a raconté qui était Max Ernst
Cécile's memories were vivid enough to help her locate several of the murals during this famous first trip to Eaubonne:

"Ici [she meant the wall originally bearing Histoire Naturelle], il y avait une armoire, une grosse armoire, quelque chose d'assez massif. J'ai dit: 'Il faut déplacer l'armoire, parce que c'est là que se trouve la chose la plus intéressante ...'"23

And behind the armoire, showing through the cut-out parts of the old wallpaper, they indeed found the very large panel now known as Histoire Naturelle:

"... On est monté dans la chambre car Cécile avait un souvenir beaucoup plus précis au premier étage. Et là, ayant tiré, poussé le grand lit des Moraine ainsi qu'une grande armoire 1930 avec des glaces, nous avons vu que le papier tout en haut dans le coin gauche était un peu décollé. J'ai commencé à tirer dessus. Robert m'a aidé et le papier est venu par grands lambeaux. Et on a commencé à voir apparaître Histoire Naturelle évidemment avec une grande excitation. Et on a tiré, et on a tiré ... Ce fut un grand moment!"24

Assured that some of the major paintings were still in existence and in relatively good condition,25 that same afternoon Robert and Cécile Valette made an agreement with the Moraines. The Moraines were to move out of their house for five months to allow a restorer to remove from the walls all remaining decorations and motifs. The Valettes were to give them a financial compensation and to pay for all repairs needed after the restorer's intervention.26

The very short period of time accepted by the Moraines explains the haste in which the restorer had to work, haste complicated by
unexpected technical difficulties. At first examination, the removal of the paintings from the walls did not seem much of a problem. Both Roger Dérieux, himself a painter,27 and Gérard Guyomard, the restorer commissioned by the Valettes to do the removal and the restoration work,28 thought that the plaster support would react normally, that is would come off easily and, with it, the painted-over compositions. But this was not the case. The original plaster had been blended with a slag-like or clinker-like substance which hardened the mix and made the restorer's work incredibly difficult. Pressured by the time available, neither the Valettes nor Gérard Guyomard thought of drawing the plans of the house, or of taking notes regarding the date and sequence in which the frescoes were found and removed from the walls. With the help of an architect29 and the agreement of the present owner,30 the plans of the house have been drawn floor by floor and then room by room, to replace every element in the place where Max Ernst originally painted it. These plans, and the pictures taken on November 24, then December 14, 1967 by Etienne Hubert,31 a professional photographer commissioned at the time by Robert Valette, are the only means by which the Max Ernst decorations at Eaubonne can be reconstructed.

The house itself, as it existed in April 1923, was described as follows in the sale contract between the Hennocque family, and Paul and Gala Eluard:

"Désignation:
Une propriété sise à Eaubonne (Seine et Oise), avenue Hennocque, n° 4, comprenant:
Maison d'habitation, élevée sur caves d'un rez-de-chaussée, divisé en cuisine, salle à manger, salon, office,
et d'un premier étage divisé en trois chambres à feu,
cabinet de toilette, water-closets,
et d'un deuxième étage divisé en trois chambres,
Cour et jardin,
Le tout d'un contenance de mille neuf cent seize mètres carrés cadastré section A n°s 1143 et 1144...." (see footnotes 2 and 5).
When comparing this very formal description with the plans drawn in November 1984, the following changes can be pointed out:

- On the rez-de-chaussée: no major structural changes except for the transformation of the office (pantry) into a water-closet built by the Moraines in the 1960's; and also the possible removal of a partition between the living room and the dining room which will be discussed below (Plan I);

- On the premier étage: creation of a bathroom in what was described in the contract as one of the three bedrooms. This transformation was made by the Eluards when they remodeled the house (Plan II);

- On the deuxième étage: three main spaces still exist but, according to Cécile Eluard, here the overall plan has been greatly modified by the installation of a new cabinet de toilette, that is, a small room with a wash basin, and it is difficult -- if not impossible -- to recreate the original floor plan since Mr. and Mrs. Moraine, who undertook this modification, died in the early 1970's (Plan III).

Despite the fact that the paintings have been removed, the visitor who today enters the house may still expect an enticing experience. However, after climbing a few steps that lead to the front door, very quickly expectation turns into disappointment. The interior seen from the entrance hall is so conventional that all the resources of one's imagination are needed to recreate the interplay of contrasting colors and frescoes with which Ernst had transformed a cozy suburban residence into a poet's retreat. And this is perhaps why the first three individuals able to see Ernst's murals after their disappearance for nearly forty years were so overwhelmed as they uncovered a whole new world of colors and visions:
"Nous tirions sur le papier," recalled Roger Dérieux, "il y avait des bandes entières qui venaient, qui jonchaient le sol ... C'était une sorte de 'happening'! Et à travers ce vieux papier fané apparaissaient des couleurs absolument fauves, violentes ... C'était extraordinaire."

After a little while, when the eye has adjusted to the relatively dim light of the entry hall, the excitement returns. There — on a panel overlooked by the Valettes and the restorer above the double doors facing the entrance — flies a female nude on a golden ground, arms wide open and a red smile illuminating her face otherwise in shadow (fig. 44-45). Ernst's soaring creature still greets the contemporary visitor crossing the doorstep. A sort of irony exists in the fact that the first element of the cycle to be experienced when entering the house is now the last and only one still in its original situs (Plan IV).

When Gérard Guyomard investigated the whole house, it did not occur to him that Ernst could have, besides painting the walls, added a motif above the double door in the entry. The "flying creature" was discovered by the Moraines. When they finally returned to their home, they decided to renovate the entry which, untouched by the restorer, seemed a little shabby compared to the rest of the freshly painted house. Immediately alerted by the Moraines, Valette and Guyomard found that it was too late and too complicated to have the little panel removed. Since then, with the old paper which concealed it cleaned away, what we may call the "Flying Angel" watches over Eaubonne.

The recovery of this fragment is, in fact, extremely important in understanding Ernst's range of colors for the entire rez-de-chaussée. Taking his inspiration from the obtrusive tile floor — whose floral motif is so typical of the late nineteenth century — Ernst worked the three main spaces of this level, entrée, salle à manger and séjour into a sandy golden tonality based on the tiles themselves (fig. 46).
Ochre beige, golden yellow and two shades of blue are the dominant colors of the entry floor, which Ernst used not only for the walls and ceiling of the adjacent rooms, but also in the stairwell leading to the premier étage. There instead of a solid golden field, he opted for an interplay of blue and beige -- beige on the steps, blue on the "contre-marches" -- which created a transition with the strong blue he picked for the premier étage.

Two other major paintings in other rooms on the rez-de-chaussée seem to have been keyed to the color and theme of the "Flying Angel." In the salle à manger, facing the doorway in straight axis, used to stand the large panel Il ne faut pas voir la réalité telle que je suis (fig. 47); in the séjour the center of the ceiling was occupied by Merveilles vous dansez sur les sources du ciel (fig. 50). The three works display nude female figures with raised arms and share the same golden background which suggest that the whole floor was given this golden tonality. Unfortunately, the color scheme of the kitchen is not known. Buried under several thick coats of Ripolin, the former tonality could not be recovered.

Reconstruction of the cycle on the rez-de-chaussée raises several questions. Even though Guyomard, Valette and Derieux's accounts are in accord and confirmed by photographs, the exact location of the door Entrer,Sortir is not resolved. Similarly, speculation remains as to the orientation of the ceiling motif found in the séjour.

In the salle à manger, on the western wall, extending from the window's right edge to the stump of a possible former partition and slightly overlapping it, was discovered the composition with the two interlocking female figures, later entitled Il ne faut pas voir la réalité telle que je suis (point 1, Plan V). The actual corner line exactly corresponded to the drastic change of color in the flat green and brown silhouette (fig. 48). Taking advantage of what could have been for others a serious compositional problem, Max Ernst used
11. Eaubonne, November 1967,
Gerald Guyomard at work on Il ne faut pas
voir la réalité telle que je suis
the right angle as a dividing device. Transferred onto canvas and now understood as totally flat, il ne faut pas voir la réalité ... has lost something of its former wit and humor. But Etienne Hubert's photographs help us recapture Ernst's astute solution. Several pictures taken while the work was still on its structural support show precisely where Gérard Guyomard decided to crop the composition which otherwise would have extended up to the window edge (fig. 49). The present width of the transferred work is only 80 centimeters, whereas the panel would have been about 150 centimeters. In height, the panel still has its original dimension, 175 centimeters measured from under the cornice to above the plinth.

An arbitrary shape was also given to Merveilles vous dansez sur les sources du ciel (fig. 50). Originally painted on the ceiling of the séjour, Merveilles ... appeared simply to float, unanchored. Guyomard, drawing from the center (indicated by the hanging chandelier, fig. 51), enclosed it in a circle with a diameter of 100 centimeters. Subsequently he transferred his circular cut to a square canvas of 100 x 100, which explains the two different fields of the background. The recovery of the ceiling motif was even more amazing than the recovery of the other compositions. Gérard Guyomard explained that white paint and not paper was used in this case by the Moraines to hide the fresco:

"Si on a retrouvé le plafond c'est parce qu'à l'époque on employait du blanc gélatineux. Si l'on avait repeint le plafond comme l'on repeint aujourd'hui (he meant using modern synthetic paint), on ne l'aurait pas retrouvé [...]. Avec une lumière frisante, on devinait quelque chose, et en faisant des sondages un peu partout j'ai découvert ce plafond qui était un motif libre. C'est moi qui en ai fait un cercle."

Hubert's photographs clearly show the slow reappearance of the motif in places where Guyomard had already taken off the overpaint (fig. 51-52). But a precise positioning of the composition is diffi-
cult to determine. In which direction did the mast point? Was a nothern or a southern wind blowing it to the right? Neither Guyomard nor Hubert remember the exact orientation of the painting on the ceiling.

Based on the assumption that there is some "natural" consistency in the lighter and darker passages on the figures, the shadows in Merveilles ... could provide some information about the placement of the design on the ceiling surface. The "Angel" figure found in the entrance is, for instance, clearly lighted from underneath, while the parts of its body toward the ceiling are in deep shadow. A similar reading of Il ne faut pas voir la réalité ... can be made. There, the light entering from both the adjacent and the southern windows (Plan V) hits the main figure very effectively. But this system of reading becomes less obvious when applied to Merveilles .... First one has to comprehend the work as standing not in an upright position -- as it does since its removal from the ceiling -- but as laid on a plane parallel to the ground. Two windows in this room are the main sources for light; one opens to the north and to the backyard; the other to the west and the rue Hennocque (Plan V). If one turns to the west, the most strongly lit part of the composition -- that is, the pink female body -- the green silhouette, which also receives a secondary ray of light, faces the east wall, where no window can be found. If we now shift the pink body to the north, the green figure receives the light coming across the room from the southern window; this solution seems to make more sense but cannot be correct if we assume -- as I do -- that a partition existed between salle à manger and séjour at the time the ceiling was painted by Ernst. If the ceiling painting were placed with the dark hull toward the fireplace, mast pointed toward the door in the southeast corner, the composition receives light from the existing windows in a rather logical way. One of the pictures taken by Etienne Hubert while the motif and chandelier were still attached to the ceiling (fig. 51) shows the boat not aligned with a right angle relationship to the walls, but in a diagonal direction which creates a great
dynamism in the room and seems to corroborate such a reading. But we do not know where the photographer was standing in the room when he took this picture.

Therefore, one must also consider the fact that the composition may not have been at all related to the windows and even that the lighter and darker colors have nothing to do with light and dark. Another logical approach would thus key the painting to the entrance to the room -- which means that the dark hull should be understood as close to the southeast door -- for this is another possible view of the motif seen from the door leading from the entrée into the séjour. A possible relationship between the ceiling motif and the other paintings in the room should not be underestimated either, but the matter becomes even more complicated here since speculation remains as to the position of one of the two painted doors also found on the rez-de-chaussée.

This ceiling motif was the first element to be removed from its architectural support and the one on which Guyomard experienced and refined the method of transposition he then applied to the whole house:

"J'ai tout de suite pensé à la transposition avec humidification des murs. J'ai commencé par le plafond parce que c'était le plus facile; dans la chambre au dessus j'ai percé des trous entre les interstices du plancher [dans lesquels ensuite] je versais de l'eau. Donc l'eau impréntrait tout le plafond en dessous."

Having enclosed the motif of Merveilles ... in a circle that he had cut into the plaster surface, Guyomard could then glue a gauze and a large sheet of paper to the dampened fresco. Wet, the paper expands; as it dries off, it has a tendency to retract or shrink. This simple physical capacity of the paper was the key to the whole operation. Guyomard explained:

"C'est le processus très simple de la décalcomanie: pour pouvoir retirer l'œuvre du support sur lequel elle se trouve
adossée, je suis obligé de mettre un support devant. Le tissu est collé avec une colle très simple à base de farine et de 'colle de peau'. On fait une bouillie, c'est ce que l'on appelle la colle de rentoilage; ça existe depuis le dix-huitième siècle. Souvent, lorsque je fais des transpositions, je ne mets que des papiers. À Eaubonne, je mettais un tissu parce que le tissu est beaucoup plus résistant et plus souple; un papier sur un support difficile ça se déchire."

After a few days, the ceiling fresco came off by itself. It fell from the ceiling to the floor overnight during Guyomard's absence. It was found on the ground, image reversed on the paper, white plaster showing on the back, in perfect condition:

"Je n'ai même pas eu besoin de l’arracher. Je l'ai trouvé par terre, à plat et à l'envers, blanc parce qu'il s'était décollé du plâtre, mais absolument impeccable."

The same method was used on the brick walls throughout the house:

"J'ai utilisé cette technique partout [...] Je mouillais la brique pendant au moins quinze jours pour qu'elle soit complètement imbibée d'eau. Ensuite, par capillarité, le plâtre qui m'intéressait prenait l'eau aussi et c'est comme cela que je suis arrivé à les déposer [les fresques]."

More complicated was the removal of the frescoes located on exterior (or supporting) walls. Made not of bricks but of a conglomerate of stones, mortar and cement, these walls could not be dampened as easily as the brick partitions. There -- and this was the case for Il ne faut pas voir la réalité telle que je suis -- Guyomard had to open a small trench running at the top of each composition in order to cut through the entire layer of plaster (about three centimeters deep). Then and only then could he pour water into the trench:

"J'ai fait une saignée assez importante dans le haut et tous les jours j’arrosois pour que le plâtre s'imprègne d'humidité [...] J'ai arraché tout le plâtre jusqu'à la pierre, il y en avait trois centimètres à certains endroits."
Taking more time than he had for the brick walls (two months, in some instances) Guyomard started removing the images using the same method used for the ceiling -- a method that he calls "décalcomanie."

Each motif, with its supporting gauze and paper, was eventually laid on plywood panels. The increased rigidity made the transport of the transferred works easier. The restoration process itself was done not in Eaubonne, but in Guyomard's studio in Paris. The plywood panels not only helped to keep the transferred frescoes in a flat position but also were a convenient means of storage. In his studio Guyomard could proceed to the second stage of the transposition. One by one, after erasing the excess plaster, he transferred the reverse images onto canvas using the traditional process of "rentoilage":

"Pour les peintures d'Eaubonne, c'était la même chose, mais il fallait en plus gratter l'excédent de plâtre jusqu'à la peinture, c'est-à-dire jusqu'à ce que la matière soit dure. Les aspérités de plâtre ça s'en va très bien, il suffit de mouiller et de gratter. Ensuite, j'ai remis des tarlatanes avec de la colle de rentoilage. La nouvelle tarlatane permet de supprimer le premier papier de dépose, c'est l'inverse de la première opération. Ainsi on revoit à nouveau la peinture qui est maintenant supportée par la tarlatane. Ensuite, on remet un papier calque et on rentoilte comme pour un rentoilage normal. Enfin, on tend la toile sur un chassis."

Besides the two large compositions already studied, two painted doors were also part of the rez-de-chaussée program. A 1923 or 1924 picture reproduced in the Petit catalogue shows Gala and the little Cécile seated on a sofa while Max Ernst clowning, is crouched on the floor and blowing a seashell as if it were a horn. A very lively snapshot, this picture is also a precious historical document since it reveals one of the doors in its original location (points 3 and 4, Plan V). For want of a better title, it will be referred to as "the Door with the Hands" since the hand-motif forcefully commands attention (fig. 53). This piece was not included in the Petit catalogue and remained in Robert Valette's hands until the early seventies.
12. Max, Gala and Cécile in Eaubonne, ca. 1924.
Although the old photograph proved the existence of an underlying motif, Gérard Guyomard had special difficulties to recover it. The door had been painted over with a brownish enamel, and removing the added coat was a hazardous task.

A picture taken by Etienne Hubert shows the door in Guyomard's studio, at various stages of the cleaning process (fig. 54). The hidden composition little by little shows through the darker overpaint. An extremely moving image, this photograph makes us witness to the rebirth of Ernst's imagery. Emerging from the mist, resurfing from the past, the shadow of a pink hand waves at us. Robert Valette gave the following explanations as to the condition of "the Door with the Hands":

"De toutes les peintures, c'était celle qui avait le plus souffert. Une grande partie du haut était illisible [...] Nous avions un document d'époque qui était cette fameuse photographie représentant Max Ernst, avec Gala sur le canapé, près de la porte. Mais la photo est mauvaise et l'on ne voit pas très bien les détails supérieurs. Avec Guyomard, on a essayé plusieurs couleurs pour le coeur. On a essayé du rouge, cela ne marchait pas; puis du vert. Bref, j'ai gardé très longtemps cette porte que je ne voulais pas vendre en raison des problèmes qu'elle nous avait posés."

The green color mentioned by Robert Valette was indeed the best possible transition with the upper motif, for Ernst -- refusing any frame -- extended his composition beyond the physical limit of the door itself. As a leitmotive, the open hand in profile view was repeated three times, twice on the door panel, once on the over-door space -- blue, pink, green. Growing in size but identical in shape, the three hands have now lost their rhythm. The composition could not be kept as a totality, painted as it was on two different kinds of support (wood for the door; plaster for the over-door). Guyomard and Valette opted for a fragmentation. The upper part, now titled La main verte became an independent image (fig. 55). Here, too, Hubert's photos are extremely touching. Piercing through two layers of wall paper, the "Green Hand" seems to have a life of its own (fig. 56).
When studied carefully, the snapshot of Gala and Max in front of the door reveals the existence of an intricate system of mouldings circling the door (a better print was used by Gallimard in Album Eluard, p. 89). Ernst has cut the white cuff in two parts, one just on the upper edge of the door, the other on the wall itself (fig. 57), and created with the help of the moulding an intermediate zone of a different color. Mouldings were an important visual addition that Ernst played with astutely. The print reproduced in Album Eluard clearly proves that not only were the mouldings framing the door painted differently, but also the ones circling the ceiling. Added rhythm, reaffirmed balance, repetitiveness or recall, were the direct consequences of this device, which Ernst used also in Gala and Paul's bedroom.

La Main verte itself is painted on a lighter, whitish field. This small fragment (40 x 65 cm), like the "Flying Angel" in the entrance hall, gives a clue as to the range of color used in the séjour: golden ceiling (Merveilles vous dansez sur les sources du ciel) contrasting with grey/white walls (La main verte). The fact is moreover confirmed by one of Hubert's pictures showing both the fresco Il ne faut pas voir la réalité telle que je suis and the rest of the western wall extending into the séjour (fig. 49). Two different fields are visible, a golden one in the salle à manger bears the large composition with the female nudes; the other in the séjour is totally barren but light in color and probably white. It is tempting to imagine Ernst using a similar inversion in the salle à manger where golden walls (Il ne faut pas voir la réalité ...) may have been contrasted with a white ceiling.

Also subject to the realm of supposition is the exact location of Entrer,Sortir, the second painted door belonging to the rez-de-chaussée cycle (fig. 58). For many years, the Moraines relegate this panel to the cellar where it was used to hold together piles of coal. When and why it was brought down, Pierre Moraine cannot remember. According to Cécile Eluard, this door was previously installed between
dining room and living room, which means that a partition -- now gone -- existed between these two spaces. Protruding stumps on the east and west walls (9 cm on each side) can be read as possible remnants (see Plan I). There is an obvious link between Entrer, Sortir and the "Door with the Hands." Both compositions are organized around a treelike shape and they share the same creamy white background, which confirms Cécile's memory and allows us to assume that they must have belonged to the same room. But even if we accept the existence of a partition cutting across the now unified space of the rez-de-chaussée, the original site of the door had to be established. Was it close to the two other doorways in position 5', shown on Plan V; or toward the western wall and the rue Hennocque, in position 5 on Plan V?

This later possibility seems to be the most probable for two main reasons: placed in position 5, Entrer, Sortir exactly echoes the floor plan of the premier étage where a door exists between the two rooms which were the bedrooms of Cécile and her parents (see Plan II). More important is Guyomard's statement about what he found when he removed Il ne faut pas voir la réalité ... from its architectural support. The composition of this panel, with its two figures pushed to the right, and this bizarre -- almost arbitrary-looking -- cut in the bicolored silhouette, could very well be interpreted as an accidentally cropped image, or as an entity voluntarily amputated. But, according to Guyomard, the panel was conceived by Max Ernst exactly as it looks now:

"Je pense que Max Ernst avait conçu ce panneau comme cela. Il n'y a aucun doute possible. Cela se terminait très net. Il n'y avait pas de manque."

In other words, if a partition was removed — as I believe — the door between the two rooms must have been hung next to Il ne faut pas voir la réalité... since no losses or damages on the right edge of the composition were noticed by the restorer. Consequently we can assume that Entrer, Sortir was formerly adjacent to the large fresco, with the
decorated side toward the north window and looking at the séjour. As far as restoration was concerned, this piece offered no problem. It only required cleaning away the dirt and dust accumulated during its long stay in the cellar, and two or three slight retouches.\textsuperscript{56}

Leaving the golden rez-de-chaussée and its smiling and dancing figures, the visitor encountered a more reflective mood on the premier étage. Blue dominated almost everywhere. The staircase landing was painted blue -- a vibrant blue found also in Paul and Gala's bedroom. Cécile's quarters had a lighter tone, a cool water-green that ran all around the walls. The same range of colors, blue and/or green also existed in the bathroom. But in this case, since everything is now lost, we must rely on Cécile's memory and Guyomard's investigations.

Not only different in color, the premier étage was also distinct from the rez-de-chaussée in the motifs represented. Sprung from a bestiary or an herbarium, strange animals and odd plants peopled the whole floor. An extraordinary creature welcomed anybody venturing beyond the stair landing: an immense butterfly unfolding its wings against the sky, that is, against a set of two blue doors, one leading to Gala and Paul's room, the other to the bathroom. Discovered at a later date,\textsuperscript{57} the recovery of this element first required its being removed in three different sections, then being broken down into five pieces. Painted on both doors and on the stile separating them, the body and the wings of the "Butterfly" could not be kept together. A photograph taken in Enbonne in October 1984 -- coupled with a sketch of the motif done by Gérard Guyomard a few days later -- show the exact former location of the "Butterfly" and how it looked in 1923 (fig. 59-60). These illustrations also help us understand the problems encountered by Robert Valette and the restorer. Although easily removed, the two doors and the stile -- which was part of a structural element between the parents' bedroom and the master bathroom (Plan VI), could not be kept together. The reconstruction of the "Butterfly"
would have required its being set in a similar location. Both technical and commercial reasons worked against that.

According to Robert Valette, the painted motif showed surface losses. Like the "Door with the hands," the "Butterfly" had been covered with Ripolin enamel, and the scouring was again a critical operation even though the overpaint came off more easily than expected. A picture taken by Etienne Hubert in Guymard's studio represents the two doors in various cleaning stages (fig. 61). It was finally decided to keep only the four decorated door panels and to have them included in a wall-cupboard:

"On a pensé le reconstituer [le "Papillon"]. Et puis on a vu que cela serait difficile dans sa forme originelle. Valette a alors décidé de ne prendre que les éléments peints et d'en faire un placard pour lui."

Though deprived of its body and cut into four pieces, the "Butterfly" of Eaubonne has nevertheless kept something of its former grandeur (fig. 62-63).

The "Butterfly," like the "Flying Angel," is not listed in Werner Spies' Catalogue raisonné, and to our knowledge, pictures of it have never been published. As for the body, part of its itinerary could be tracked down. Gérard Guymard, who did not restore this portion of the "Butterfly" with the rest of Eaubonne works, kept it until it was purchased five or six years later by an art dealer. It eventually reappeared as "un totem peint par Max Ernst" and is now in Werner Spies' possession. The labeling "totem," incongruous at first thought, actually makes sense if one recalls the long and slender piece of wood on which Ernst had to enclose his design (approximately 215 cm by 8 cm).

Opening to the right, the right wing of the "Butterfly" led to the master bathroom (Plans II and VI). Overlooking the backyard, the
bathroom is a rather large room. The Eluards installed an unusually large bathtub whose weight made the floor bend slightly over the years.62 Nothing was able to be recovered from the extensive decoration of this bathroom. Cécile still recalls the room when it looked like a huge aquarium or a mysterious underwater world:

"Là, il y avait des poissons, des coquillages ... C'était vert d'eau, bleuté, comme un fond sous-marin dans lequel on se serait trouvé immergé."63

Painted over several times with thick layers of lacquer, and perhaps before that, sandpapered, Ernst's imagery is forever lost:

"J'ai apperçu des traces, mais il n'y avait plus rien à faire. En admettant même que je sois arrivé à retirer tout le Ripo-lin, j'aurais aussi enlevé le motif qui était en dessous. Il venait bien plus facilement que la laque."64

Fortunately, lacquer was not applied in the adjacent room. The Moraines, who converted Paul and Gala's bedroom into their own, chose to cover Ernst's frescoes with a "Toile de Jouy-type" paper, saving from destruction three of the most important murals of Eaubonne. Only one remains today in its original state; the two others have been either substantially modified or totally altered in the removal process. Nevertheless they must be understood as a unified entity, as a jewel-case conceived by Max Ernst to enclose Paul and Gala's conjugal bed.

When entering the room from the stair-landing, that is, after pushing the left wing of the "Butterfly," one faced the striking panel now entitled Au premier mot limpide (fig. 64) which extended from the northern window to the bathroom wall (point 1, Plan VII). At a right angle with this fresco was Histoire Naturelle (fig. 65), a huge mural which covered the entire surface of the eastern wall (point 2, Plan VII). Facing Au premier mot limpide, and again at a right angle with
Histoire Naturelle, existed a third composition (point 3, Plan VII) of which a very small fragment remains entitled **Ici l'action se simplifie** (fig. 71). This lost mural must have been equivalent in size to the one facing it, **Au premier mot limpide**.

With the help of Cécile Eliard and the remarkable pictures of Etienne Hubert, the former appearance of this trilogy in red, green and blue can be recreated. Blue was the leitmotif. tone. Despite the coldness usually attributed to this color, it was a vibrant, joyful blue which stretched from ceiling to floor, from windows to doors. Above this blue coat, Ernst painted his three panels, in each case using the strong blue as a unifying feature which served as a sky-like background.

Not only the blue sky, but also repetitive motifs linked together **Au premier mot limpide** and **Histoire Naturelle** (fig. 66-67). On both murals, with identical size, colors, and verticality, strange artichoke-like plants formed a line. Two bizarre insects suffered the same disquieting martyrdom, one hung from the red wall of **Au premier mot limpide**; the other from the massive post central to **Histoire Naturelle**. The grouping of these two murals with the other panel, now dismembered, is in itself intriguing. Why concentrate all the narrative on one side of the room and leave the rest of the walls free of any decoration? In the downstairs area, murals and painted doors were scattered alternatively on walls, passageways and ceiling in a relatively balanced rhythm, allowing the visitor's eye to wander around the room in a slow circular movement. The space in Gala and Paul's bedroom must be understood differently. The "trilogy" required a motionless attitude on the part of the viewer; it had the quality of a backdrop, a stage set-like organization which becomes obvious when the position of the furniture inside the room is taken into consideration.
According to Cécile's memory, Paul and Gala's bed -- in fact a large couch -- stood with its head against the red wall of Au premier mot limpide and alongside Histoire Naturelle:

"Sous 'La Main' et le long de 'La Forêt', il y avait un divan pour deux personnes, pas un vrai lit. La tête était le long de 'La Main'. Je m'en souviens très bien parce que mon père est resté allongé au moins un mois dans ce lit, il était malade, couché dans cette chambre. Il y avait une tortue avec une feuille de salade au milieu de la pièce, et moi je venais un petit peu, pas longtemps pour ne pas le fatiguer, et il me racontait des histoires. Je m'en souviens très bien."66

This statement is fundamental to the understanding of the very clever articulation Ernst created between Histoire Naturelle and the missing third panel. Both the plan (Plan VII) and Hubert's picture (fig. 69) must be studied in order to understand that the painter had to deal with two openings of different sizes. On the eastern wall was a small door giving access to the bathroom. On the southern partition were two other larger doors: one, close to the bathroom on the left, bore on the reverse the left wing of the "Butterfly," the other door to the far right led to Cécile's room. There was a considerable discrepancy in scale between the two adjacent doors in the southeast corner -- the door to the bathroom being both shorter and narrower than the entry door. To counterbalance this odd construction, Ernst had a bold idea. He added to the right of the entry a trompe-l'oeil opening, identical in size, shape, and color to the real bathroom door included in Histoire Naturelle (fig. 70). And suddenly, instead of an awkward relationship between a large door and a small door, he created a strong but very stable symmetrical rhythm of horizontal and vertical lines, of short and tall panels, of real and counterfeit spaces.

In Hubert's photographs taken during the winter of 1967, the two real doors appear white. But we must imagine them as they were in 1923 -- blue like the rest of the room, and, like their trompe-l'oeil
sister, illuminated with an elaborate system of mouldings in three
different shades. Mouldings were certainly not neglected by Ernst. On
the contrary, as seen in the séjour, he used this device as a sometimes
smooth, sometimes sharp transition between his motifs. In Gala and
Paul's bedroom, ceiling mouldings also played their part as revealed by
a 1925 photograph published at the time in Bulletin de l'Effort Moderne
(fig. 68). This historical document clearly shows that Ernst, taking
advantage of convex and concave surfaces, added a succession of lighter
and darker tones around the room -- a succession echoed by the similar
movement of the high baseboard.

Because of their composite structural supports -- and like the
"Butterfly" piece, or the door and over-door with the "Hands" -- the
two murals which, in the Eluard's room, included real doors in their
design could not be recovered as complete units. Speaking of the
restoration of Histoire Naturelle, Robert Valette explained:

"Il est évident que l'on ne pouvait pas vendre un tableau avec
une forme pareille [he meant with the empty space corres-
dponding to the real bathroom door which was left on the
spot]; on ne pouvait pas non plus l'amputer de tout un
morceau en haut [the painted area above the real door]. La
première idée qui venait à l'esprit était de reconstituer la
porte sur la toile [...] Guyomard a du constater que la
porte en trompe-l'œil se mettait spontanément là, qu'elle
trouvait facilement sa place."

And, indeed, this is exactly what the restorer did. Cutting around
the shape of the trompe-l'œil door, he extracted that door and inserted it
in the composition of Histoire Naturelle. Guyomard and Valette's
decision maintained the appearance of wholeness of the panel formerly
on the east wall. The trompe-l'œil motif exactly fit in the empty
space left by the real wooden panel, as if Max Ernst knew from the
beginning that one day his compositions would be removed from the walls
and transferred onto canvas.
13. Reconstruction of Paul and Gala's bedroom decoration:
1. Au premier mot limpide,
2. Histoire Naturelle,
3. "Trompe-l'oeil Door," partially destroyed,
4. Ici l'action se simplifie, remaining fragment of fresco n° 3.
Unfortunately, in doing so, the third panel was totally altered. Only the upper part of it remained, that is, an oblique red stick resting on the false door frame, and a slender green bottle leaning against a fake recess in the wall. Guyomard and Valette decided that only the bottle motif could be saved. Now a small fragment, the "Green Bottle" also known as *Ici l'action se simplifie* (fig. 71) has been deprived of the context which, before its transfer to canvas, enabled the viewer to understand it as standing on a door-casing in a very precarious balance.

The decoration in Cécile's bedroom was conceived according to a very different scheme, even though it communicated with her parents' room. Instead of large frescoes, Ernst created for the little girl a world of images more adapted in size to her young age. Rejuvenating the traditional theme of the frieze, the painter designed an endless round of small tableaux in the upper part of the wall.

Here again, it has been necessary to reconstruct the sequence of images. Guyomard cut the frieze into ten pieces. Nine were reproduced in the Petit catalogue and in Spies, but without any indication of their relationship or even that they came from the same room. The missing piece has been found and the relationship of all ten fragments may now be presented for the first time.

As in the other rooms, the fragmentation of the frieze is the consequence of both technical and commercial factors. Technically, it was easier to remove the painted decoration in small portions, and from a commercial standpoint, small works could be offered at a lower, thus more attractive, price. The dismantling and fragmentation of the frieze again meant crucial choices for Robert Valette and Gérard Guyomard. But the inner logic of this ensemble made the task a less painful and radical one than for Gala and Paul's decoration. "On peut dire que c'étaient, par les motifs mêmes, pré-découpé. C'était facile à découper, c'est une succession de tableaux," recalls Robert Valette.
"J'ai fait cela (le découpage) en accord avec Robert Valette. Pour certains le choix était facile ... Plus compliqués ont été les grands motifs à la suite. Là, c'était plus arbitraire ...," admits Gérard Guyomard.74

To understand the distinction made by the restorer between the easy-to-fragment and the more-complicated-to-divide images, we need to turn to the works themselves and to the reconstruction that has been worked out thanks to Guyomard's recollections and Hubert's pictures. The running motif was painted above large expanses of solid green walls -- a cool, light green that Max Ernst picked as the dominant tonality of the room. Two doors (one leading to the parents' quarters, the other giving access to the stairwell), two windows (on the southern and western walls), and a fireplace set obliquely in the southwestern corner of the room, were the five main elements that Ernst had to take into consideration (Plan VIII). Using the main door axis to bring into focus the most prominent motif, he painted Il n'y a plus de vraies hydrocyclettes on the western wall, between the window and the separation door, just opposite the entrance door to Cécile's bedroom (fig. 72). Referring to this panel as number 1 and starting here, we have moving clockwise:

- on the north wall, successively, 2. Cantique above the separation door (fig. 75); 3. Rien n'est incompréhensible (fig. 77); and 4. Les labyrinthes ne sont pas faits pour les chiens (fig. 79).

- on the east wall, successively, 5. Conseils d'ami partially above the entry door (fig. 82); 6. Autant rêver d'ouvrir les portes de la mer (fig. 84); and 7. Réveil officiel du serin (fig. 87).
14. Reconstruction of Cécile's frieze:
1. Il n'y a plus de vraies hydrocyclettes,
2. Cantique,
3. Rien n'est incompréhensible,
4. Les labyrinthes ne sont pas faits pour les chiens,
5. Conseils d'amitié,
6. Autant rêver d'ouvrir les portes de la mer,
7. Réveil officiel du serin,
8. Fin de circonstances,
9. Les oiseaux ne peuvent disparaître,
- on the south wall, successively, 8. *Fin de circonstances* to the left of the window (fig. 90); and 9. *Les oiseaux ne peuvent disparaître* to the right of the window (fig. 92).

- above the fireplace, and slightly overlapping on the western wall 10. the missing, untitled element found in Guyomard's studio, which for convenience will be called throughout this study, "The House" motif (fig. 94).

The heights of the murals were consistent but the lengths of the various panels differed greatly. Instead of a repetitious motif, Ernst chose to unfold a series of apparently unrelated images, which he visually separated from one another with different devices borrowed from architecture: sentry-boxes or cabins, ruins, city views in perspective, and cross sections. Following Ernst's organization, Guyomard astutely divided the frieze at every change of motif. His choices and technique are clearly demonstrated by Hubert's pictures taken while the frieze was still on the four walls.

The separation between *Il n'y a plus de vraies hydrocycleettes* and *Cantique* fit exactly into the northwestern corner of the room (fig. 73-74). A little bicolored sentry-box, set at right angles and topped with a red roof, served as a transition. Part of it now belongs to the first panel; the other portion is included in the second one. The passage between *Cantique* and *Rien n'est incompréhensible* required more thought (fig. 76). Guyomard opted for a clear cut at the right end of the leading image. Although Max Ernst had dealt ambiguously with the problem -- the blue stripe acting as a dividing line between the two tableaux could be read as belonging to either one -- Guyomard decided to include it in *Rien n'est incompréhensible* instead of using it as a stabilizing element for the strong oblique line of *Cantique*. The transition between *Rien n'est incompréhensible* and *Les labyrinthes ne sont pas faits pour les chiens*, the following image in the series, was even more difficult to handle. There, Ernst did not make a clear rupture of
planes but hid the transformation of one color (beige) in another (dark
green) behind a ruin-like structure pushed to the foreground (fig. 80).
It was impossible to cut through this transition motif, and Guyomard
decided to make the cut a few centimeters ahead of it, thus leaving a
clue as to where *Les Labyrinthes* stood in the sequence of images.

*Cantique, Rien n'est incompréhensible* and *les Labyrinthes ...*
occupied the whole length of the north wall. At a right angle to the
*Labyrinthes*, on the east wall and partially above the entry door, was
*Conseils d'ami* (fig. 81). To divide these two images, Guyomard had to
follow the corner-line between the two walls. A more difficult task
was the separation of *Conseils d'ami* from *Autant rêver d'ouvrir les
portes de la mer*. In reference to *Autant rêver...* Guyomard indicated:
"on a coupé ici, on aurait pu couper là; on a coupé finalement là et là
pour laisser un peu d'espace au lieu de couper au ras des maisons."
Indeed, these two little "slices" of space were indispensable in
accentuating the sense of weightlessness central to this image (fig.
84-85-86). Immediately following *Autant rêver...* was *Réveil officiel
du serin*. There, Guyomard decided to free totally the motif from any
kind of limitation or reference to the earthly world (fig. 88-89). On
the left, he drew a straight line at a point where no sandy ground
would be left in the image, and on the right he simply dropped the
visual separation (a yellow band) that Ernst had painted to reinforce
the corner line between east and south walls. Guyomard applied the
same simplifying rule for *Fin de circonstances* which he liberated from
its vertical boundaries (fig. 91). The south window separated *Fin de
circonstances* from *Les oiseaux ne peuvent disparaître*. For the latter
Guyomard had nothing more to do than simply lift the motif as an inte-
gral whole, that is with its right and left framing elements (fig. 93).

More precarious was the fate of the tenth and last tableau in the
frieze. Directly above the fireplace and slightly overlapping the
western wall, the motif was partially hidden behind a large rounded
mirror set there as a mantelpiece (fig. 95). After the removal of the
mirror (fig. 96), Valette and Guyomard discovered that the motif was very simple, almost barren, and decided to leave it on the wall:

"Je lui [Robert Valette] avais expliqué que cette partie là était compliquée à retirer à cause du conduit de cheminée et lui, de son coté, ne trouvait pas le motif très intéressant. On a donc décidé de le laisser," explained Guyomard. 77

"On a considéré que cela avait peu d'importance. Cela faisait vraiment 'dessin d'enfant' ...," added Valette. 78 The dealer André François Petit shared the same opinion: "une chose ou deux avaient été laissées de coté parce qu'on ne les avait pas jugées intéressantes." 79 Time also worked against the last portion of the frieze: "Il y avait un retard de la part du restaurateur et c'était resté dans la maison. Ce n'était pas prêt pour l'exposition," complained Petit. In fact, Guyomard had some misgivings about abandoning this piece of the puzzle, and at the last minute removed it from the wall:

"Enfin, quand j'ai eu terminé mon travail de dépose et que j'ai vu cela [le dernier panneau], je me suis dit: 'tout de même, c'est idiot de le laisser là'!... Je l'ai donc en fin de compte déposé. Il était dans l'atelier parmi mes travaux. Il y est resté plusieurs années ... et un jour je m'y suis mis." 81

Valette was shown the result of the restoration work. He simply told Guyomard to keep the small panel as a souvenir of this incredible adventure. And since that date, this untitled element of Cécile's frieze has hung in Gérard Guyomard's studio.

A quick comparison between fig. 94 and 96, both depicting the tenth panel, reveals an important difference. On the wall and as painted by Ernst, the right and left sentry-boxes framing the larger central cabin were both topped with dark blue roofs. As they appear now on the canvas, the roofs have been changed to a bright green. The substitution of green for the original blue creates an alternate rhythm
which is perhaps more logical in the isolated and transferred composition, but nevertheless is a serious departure from the original.

The deuxième étage was Ernst's. The transition he organized between premier and deuxième étage is not known. Pierre Moraine cannot remember the original color scheme of the stairwell leading to the top floor. Did Ernst again play a game of alternation, cold color opposed to warm tone -- this time blue and red -- to provide a logical transition between the bright blue of the premier étage and the wild red of the deuxième étage? Assumption or assertion? The key to this answer is forever lost.

On this floor, Cécile recalls only two rooms and not three, as mentioned by the 1923 contract, or as is the case now (Plan III). According to her, next to Max's atelier was only one guest room:

"Il [Max Ernst] avait une chambre tout au dernier étage que l'on appelait son atelier et qui donnait derrière ... Et au même étage, de l'autre côté, il y avait une chambre d'amis, mais qui n'a jamais servi et que l'on appelait 'la chambre rouge' parce qu'elle était entièrement peinte en rouge vif, un rouge provocuant, assez insupportable. Mais cela a été détruit."52

The overall surface of the deuxième étage is slightly smaller than the other two floors, due to the recess of the roof. Another noticeable difference is the absence of truncated corners on the southwest and northwest sides. Actually, on this level the chimney ducts become exterior shafts. The Morsaines who, in 1932, added on this floor a small cabinet de toilette may also have removed or simply moved the partitions. With no living witness, it is impossible to reconstruct with precision the former organization of this level. Remnants of the "shocking" red have been found by Guyomard and pictured by Hubert (fig. 97) but neither one remember which corner is represented in the photograph. When collated with the plan, this image can only fit in one place, that is in the southwest corner of the house, directly above
Cécile's room and fireplace (point 1 on Plan III). The "guest room" mentioned by Cécile was thus above her own.

Max Ernst also painted a few motifs — at least two — on this floor. One of them could have been another ominous female nude. Cécile remembers a female torso displaying incredible, large breasts:

"Dans le coin, un coin comme dans la salle à manger, il y avait 'la femme'. Vous la décrire réellement, c'est difficile! Je me rappelle d'une femme avec des seins énormes, peut-être un buste: ça, je m'en souviens très bien, des seins roses, très provoquants. Mais tout cela a été détruit par les gens quand ils ont acheté la maison."83

Guyomard made several investigations on this étage. In one of the corners pointed out by Cécile (point 2 on Plan III), he found under the Ripolin a few traces of an underlying motif but could not recover it:

"[J'ai trouvé] juste quelques traces dans ce petit recoin, des traces de couleur rouge. J'ai essayé de décaper, mais je n'ai rien vu. En fait, tout a été poncé et on ne peut rien retrouver [...] Au second étage, la peinture devait être beaucoup moins sale — moins de fumeurs ou moins de vapeurs sans doute — et la couche supplémentaire de peinture a imprégné le fond. Encore une fois, j'ai vu des traces, mais c'était irrécupérable."84

A picture taken by Etienne Hubert at the time this investigation was conducted, does show a small shadowy zone which, perhaps, belonged to the woman's breast (fig. 98). In Max Ernst's atelier, which overlooked the backyard (fig. 99), Guyomard did not find anything. His statement is categorical: "Dans l'atelier, rien!"

Perhaps only legendary is another motif, which was mentioned to me both by Pierre Moraine85 and Jean Fesneau,86 the latter amplifying what he had been told by the former. According to both of them, Max Ernst had also painted a large "eye" on the ceiling of what is now the cabinet de toilette. This "eye" was placed in such a position that at
a certain angle it could be seen from the front yard through the upper window (point 3 on Plan III). The idea is intriguing but cannot be taken for granted. Cécile has absolutely no memory whatsoever of this "eye." Pierre Moraine was at some point told about it by his parents. Since then, the story has been passed on by "word of mouth."

Other tales now whispered by the whole neighborhood speak of witchcraft sessions, black masses, and orgiastic gatherings. Deprived of its decorations, the house of Paul and Gala Eluard has lost a great deal of its former charm, but it has nevertheless become an inexhaustible subject of conversation and a place for Sunday pilgrimages. Schoolboys and schoolgirls of Eaubonne know more about Paul Eluard and Max Ernst than did the previous generation, and the most adventurous of them sometimes dare to ring the bell and ask for a tour of the house. Imperceptibly, 4 avenue Hennocque has entered history.
Chapter II
NOTES

1. See detail of Michelin map "Environs de Paris," fig. 37.

2. This detail is attested to by the 1923 purchase contract which I was given permission to read and to quote. This document stipulated:

"Il est expressément convenu que Monsieur Grindel devra faire son affaire personnelle, sans recours contre les vendeurs, de l'entretien de l'Avenue Hennocque qui est une voie privée non encore classée."

3. Robert Valette, in Eluard, Livre d'identité, p. 47, has reproduced a photograph entitled "Gala à Eaubonne, vers 1924," showing Gala about to enter a car parked just in front of this fence and piers which can be compared in the same setting sixty years later (figs. 39-40).

4. This watercolor by J. Labourasse, dated July 7, 1938, was kindly lent to me by Pierre Moraine (see p. 69).

5. The purchase contract signed under the auspices of "Me Fournier, notaire à Saint-Denis" is dated April 21 and April 27, 1923.

6. This detail is provided in Paul Eluard, Lettres à Gala 1924-1948, p. 404, note 4:

"En 1923, Eluard avait déménagé de la maison qu'il habitait à Saint-Brice pour venir s'installer dans la villa d'Eaubonne, près de la forêt de Montmorency, avec Gala,
Cécile et Max Ernst qui habitait avec eux depuis septembre 1922. Dans cette maison, qui avait été offerte à Eluard par son père ...."

7. According to the contract of April 1923, a large piece of land was purchased in 1864 by Mr. and Mrs. Louis-Charles Hennocque -- grandparents of the brothers Hennocque who sold the house to Paul and Gala -- from a certain "Jules Pierre François Stanislas Desnoyers, membres [sic] de l'Institut, Bibliothécaire du Museum d'Histoire Naturelle de Paris, Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur." Later, the land was divided into smaller lots, including the one on which stands the Eluard's house. This contract does not indicate a precise date for the edifice itself, but describes it as being erected between 1864 (purchase of the empty lot) and 1878 (death of Mrs. Louis-Charles Hennocque): "...Les constructions ayant été édifiées pendant le cours de la communauté de biens ayant existé entre M. et Mme Hennocque ...."

8. Throughout this study the French wording will be used, Rez-de-chaussée should thus be understood as ground level or street level, premier étage and deuxième étage being respectively, according to the American habit, the second and third floors.

9. Describing the house, Cécile Eluard explained:

"Elle [la maison] était déjà construite, mais on l'a réhabilitée, comme l'on dit maintenant ... Elle existait sous la même forme architecturale, mais on a installé la salle de bains qui était assez moderne pour l'époque et qui occupe, d'ailleurs, une assez grande surface" (Interview, October 22, 1984).

10. "Il [Max Ernst] avait une chambre tout au dernier étage que l'on appelait son atelier et qui donnait derrière. Il y avait une espèce de balcon, il me semble, enfin une espèce de chose qui avançait ..." Cécile Eluard, interview, October 22, 1984.
11. As indicated in the contract of April 1923, the whole neighborhood was developed in the late 1860's/early 1870's by Louis-Charles Hennocque. Avenue Hennocque was part of that development. For example, on the other side of the street, the house bearing n° 1, is almost a replica, just a little larger, of Eluard's. Both buildings have in common the same slate roof and window design, and the same overall symmetry, but the opposite house does not show a larger eccentric opening on the deuxième étage.

12. Letters to the author from Dorothea Tanning's representative (June 13, 1984), and from Mrs. Jimmy Ernst (September 8, 1984).

13. The fact that for several years — roughly from 1921 to 1925-1926 — Eluard was Ernst's only client and patron is widely acknowledged.


15. Cécile recalled:

"J'ai l'impression que quand j'y suis allée pour la première fois [à Eaubonne], je devais avoir cinq ou six ans ... J'étais dans la maison quand mon père est parti faire le tour du monde. L'autre repère, c'est l'école. Je suis allée à l'école à Eaubonne à sept ans. J'étais un an en retard, mais on m'avait déjà appris à lire. J'ai dû quitter Eaubonne un peu plus tard." (Interview, October 22, 1984).


18. Mr. and Mrs. Léon Moraine purchased the house from Paul and Gala Eluard, then already divorced, on June 7, 1932 (copy of the contract in Pierre Moraine's hands) and moved in that same year with their son Pierre, aged two. Extensive work was done at that time which destroyed the paintings in the bathroom on the premier étage and considerably modified the floor plan of the deuxième étage.

The house, according to Pierre Moraine (interview, October 29, 1984), remained on the market for a long time. Possibly the paintings or its distance from the station discouraged potential buyers. Perhaps most significant was the economic crisis. As the recently published Lettres à Gala 1924-1948 reveal, Gala and Paul hardly lived in Eaubonne after 1928. Starting in 1929, Gala spent more and more time in Spain with Salvador Dali whom she married in 1931.

19. After the death of both his parents, Pierre Moraine sold the house on January 15, 1972 to Mr. and Mrs. Jean Pesneau who are the present owners.

20. Cécile Eluard admitted:

"Je m'en souvenais [les peintures] ... mais j'ai été surprise de m'apercevoir que cela existait toujours. Cela aurait pu être abîmé, tout aurait pu être comme la salle de bains. Dans un sens, c'était miraculeux. Le fait qu'il y ait eu du papier, cela a protégé les peintures." (Interview, October 22, 1984).


26. "Ils [les Moraine] ont choisi la solution qui consistait à nous vendre le droit d'arracher les peintures pendant un délai qui était de quelques mois. Ce qui a rendu les choses possibles, c'est que cette maison, ils ne l'habitaient que pendant les mois d'été. Ils nous ont donc livré la maison d'octobre à février, si mes souvenirs sont bons ..."

"... Je leur ai dit: ... on vous fait retapisser toute la maison à nos frais avec les papiers peints que vous voudrez." Robert Valette, interview, November 13, 1984.

27. "J'ai regardé le fond. J'ai vu que c'était peint à l'huile sur ce qui m'a paru être un plâtre ... Mais ce qui s'est passé -- Guyomard vous le confirmera -- c'était bien un plâtre, mais un plâtre qui s'est comporté comme un ciment. C'est un plâtre dans lequel on avait du mélanger quelque chose, je ne sais quoi." Roger Dérieux, interview, October 24, 1984.

28. "... Je pensais que cela allait être relativement facile car j'avais déjà déposé des fresques ... mais je me suis vite rendu compte que cela allait être un travail considérable pour la simple raison qu'au lieu d'être peintes sur une matière friable, ces fresques-là étaient sur un plâtre consolidé avec du mâchefer ... [Le mâchefer] durcit le plâtre et celui-ci ne réagit plus de la
mêmes facon ... Le machefer, je ne pouvais pas le scier, il heurtait mes outils. Impossible à travailler." Gérard Guyomard, interview, October 27, 1984.

29. Guilhem Ferry, from Ceria & Coupel A.A., Paris & Houston, to whom I am greatly indebted.

30. At the invitation of Jean Fesneau, I visited the house twice, first on October 19, then November 5, 1984.

31. For the illustration of my thesis, Etienne Hubert kindly let me choose from his archives all the photographs that were explanatory documents. Excepting fig. 66, none of these pictures has ever been reproduced before.


34. "Tout au dernier etage ... il y avait une une chambre d'amis ... mais qui a été détruite.

"Il n'y avait pas de cabinet de toilette. C'était une chambre. La salle de bains était en dessous." Cécile Eluard, interview, October 22, 1984.

35. Their son, Pierre was too young to remember anything when his parents made these changes. He had always known the house as it appears now. Pierre Moraine, interview, October 29, 1984.

36. "Dans l'ensemble, c'était très conventionnel ... A part les peintures qui étaient étranges, c'était une maison banale." Cécile Eluard, interview, October 22, 1984.

38. "Guyomard se balladait dans la maison avec son produit [a paint solvant] et essayait un peu partout ... Nous n'avons pas pensé une seconde qu'il pouvait y avoir quelque chose à cet endroit [le dessus-de-porte]. On avait pourtant sondé tous les murs!" Robert Valette, interview, November 13, 1984.


40. This work is not listed in Werner Spies Catalogue raisonné, nor mentioned or reproduced in the Petit catalogue. I was granted the permission by Mr. and Mrs. Jean Fesneau to take pictures and to publish them.

41. Thousands of similar patterns can be found in houses and apartment buildings constructed in Paris and its outskirts from the 1870's to the turn of the century.

42. Asked about the tile-floor in the entry, Pierre Moraine told me that it belonged to the original design of the house. According to him: "les marches de l'escalier avaient été peintes en beige-jaune, et les contre-marches en bleu-roi." He also added that his "parents avaient conservé ces couleurs pendant un certain temps." Interview, October 29, 1984.

It should be noted that yellow and blue were given a symbolic meaning by Ernst as early as 1917. In an article entitled "Vom Werden der Farbe," and largely influenced by Kandinsky and Delaunay, he wrote (Der Sturm, 8, n° 5, August 1917, pp. 66-68):

"Blau und Gelb sind erste Farbwerdung der polaren Farbtotlilitaten Finsternis und Licht, die masslose Kugel Firmament und die endliche Kugel Erde erst Formwerdung der polaren Farben Blau und Gelb."
(Blue and yellow are the first apparitions in color of the colored totalities of darkness and light, the measureless sphere of the firmament and the finite sphere of the earth, the first formation of the primary colors, blue and yellow).

Besides working within the color range of the tile floor, did Ernst still have in mind his 1917 theory when he undertook his decoration of the Eluard home? It is hard to say but worth remembering.

43. Concerning the color scheme in the kitchen, Cécile Eluard answered: "Je ne m'en souviens pas. C'était assez sombre, elle donnait sur le jardín avec un petit escalier. Je vois cela assez triste." Interview, October 22, 1984.

44. Gérard Guyomard, Interview, October 27, 1984.

45. Ibid.

46. Ibid.

47. Ibid.

48. Ibid.

49. Ibid.

50. Ibid.

51. The "Door with the Hands" was eliminated by André-François Petit from his show in 1969:

"Il y avait, je pense, un ou deux choses qui avaient été laissées de côté parce qu'on ne les avaient pas jugées très intéressantes ..." (Interview, October 23, 1984).
This work was signed by Max Ernst at a much later date but is nevertheless listed by Werner Spies in the catalogue raisonné (See Chapter III, pp. 120-121).


54. To the question: "D'où vient la porte peinte retrouvée à la cave?" Cécile Eluard replied: "Il me semble qu'elle se trouvait entre le salon et la salle à manger." Asked if she remembered a partition between those two rooms, she added: "Dans l'ensemble, c'était très conventionnel. Il y avait des portes. Cela a peut-être été agrandi" (Interview, October 22, 1984).


56. Guymard explained:


58. "Il [le 'Papillon'] n'était pas intact. Et en raison de son emplacement dans la maison, à cheval sur deux portes et un montant, il était difficile à reconstituer." Ibid.

59. Guymard recalled:
"La porte avec le Papillon n'avait pas été lavée, à mon avis, avant d'être repeinte; c'est parce qu'elle a été peinte sur la crasse que j'ai pu écailler la peinture relativement facilement. Mais là aussi, ils avaient poncé car j'ai trouvé des usures" (Interview, October 27, 1984).

60. Ibid.


62. Jean Fesneau, visit to Eaubonne, October 19, 1984.

63. Cécile Eluard, Interview, October 22, 1984.

64. Guyomard, interview, October 27, 1984.


67. Mentioned by Etienne-Alain Hubert in his article "Eluard, la femme de pierre et les filles de chair" (Champs des Activités Surréalistes, n° 20, septembre 1984, p. 71), this photograph was published in Bulletin de l'Effort Moderne, n° 12, février 1925, unpaginated, with the following caption: "Max Ernst. Fresque (Coll. de Mme Paul Elnard)" -- obviously a typographical error -- and the date, 1923.


70. It is still in Guyomard's possession and is discussed below (pp. 100-101 and 192-194). Pictures were taken and can be here presented for the first time (figs. 94-96).

71. "La frise, je n'ai pas pu la faire d'un seul tenant ... J'ai travaillé par petits éléments." Gérard Guyomard, interview, October 27, 1984.

72. "Il a avait aussi un problème commercial qui était important à l'époque ... La frise, c'était surtout cela qu'il [André-François Petit] voulait vendre." Ibid.


75. The height of the motif was determined by the amount of space available above the two doors which is, in this room, approximately 44/45 cm. Two interruptions in this chain of images are due to the two high windows, one overlooking rue Hennocque to the west, the other opening to the south. Only one panel Il n'y a plus de vraies hydrocyclottes according to the Petit catalogue differs in height from the others (46 cm instead of the average 43 cm). By looking at fig. 74 it clearly appears that Les hydrocyclottes and its immediate neighbor, Cantique, were of exactly the same height. I myself was not able to study these two panels to verify their respective dimensions. Let us assume that the slight difference may be due to a typographical error, to discrepancies in measurement, or to physical differences somehow required by the recovery process.

77. Ibid.


80. Ibid.


83. Ibid.


86. Visit to Eaubonne, October 19, 1984.
Chapter III

SOME ISSUES RAISED
BY THE DISMANTLING OF THE
EAUBONNE DECORATION

Removed from their collective environment on the walls, doors and ceilings of the Eluard's home, the Eaubonne paintings had to assume a new existence. No longer part of an ensemble, they became individual and moveable works but both their individuality and their mobility had first to be approved by their creator, Max Ernst. The separation of the works created a more pressing need for titles and required Ernst's acceptance of the fragmentation of the Eaubonne decoration. 1

The painter was informed of the recovery of the paintings at a rather late stage. Neither Cécile nor Valette contacted him immediately after their discovery. It was not until they had made an agreement with the dealer André-François Petit about the selling of some of the works removed from the house that the question of Max Ernst's approval of the action arose. An exhibition was arranged for the spring of 1969, and the editing of the accompanying catalogue begun. It was then decided that André-François Petit would contact the painter. Valette, when asked why he or Cécile did not choose to talk directly to Max Ernst, answered:

"Il s'agissait selon nous d'une entreprise de commercialisation. Il fallait obtenir et sa signature et son accord [Ernst's], et j'ai pensé qu'il valait mieux que ce soit Petit qui s'occupe de cela. Cela laissait un caractère carrément
commercial à l'opération et cela s'est fait onéreusement
d'ailleurs."²

In fact, the dismantling of the Eaubonne cycle was a sticklish
issue, especially since it had been done without prior approval of the
artist. Ernst could have opposed the sale and dispersal of the paint-
ings. Instead his reaction was one of understanding. According to
Petit, Ernst did not contest the decisions made by Valette and the
restorer regarding the removal of the paintings and the fragmentation
of certain elements, nor did he claim ownership of the works:

"J'ai parlé de ce problème là avec Max Ernst ... Dans son
esprit, les choses étaient très claires. Ces choses-là [the
paintings] appartenaient à Cécile. Il les avaient laissées
à Paul Eluard qui les avait, lui-même, laissées dans la
maison à son départ ... Cécile les avaient retrouvées, elles
appartaient à Cécile."³

Asked about Ernst's first reaction to the news that the Eaubonne
paintings had been recently uncovered, Petit recalled:

"Sa réaction [Ernst's] a été une réaction de surprise à l'idée
de savoir que cela existait encore ... Oui, une réaction
de surprise, mais assez détachée, comme si c'était assez
loin ..."⁴

That response by Ernst is confirmed by Patrick Waldberg, a friend
of the painter and author of the preface to the Eaubonne catalogue.
According to Waldberg, "Ernst parlait beaucoup et très volontiers de
Cologne et du Tyrol, mais pas d'Eaubonne."⁵ The painter was glad, of
course, that these works had been recovered but seemed more concerned
by their intrinsic quality than by the dismantling of the decoration
itself; Waldberg explained:

"Max Ernst a été content qu'on ait retrouvé ces peintures,
mais en même temps il était un peu inquiet car il ne se
souvénait plus si c'était bon ou non."⁶
Gala's reaction to the news is not known. Cécile, who at that time had only intermittent contact with her mother, never mentioned to her the recovery of the Eaubonne decoration. Cécile commented:

"En 1968, je la [Gala] voyais peu et n'abordais pas ces questions. Ma mère était un personnage assez spécial. Elle n'a pas fait de commentaires, mais à mon avis, elle n'a pas ignoré la chose. Pour elle, le passé, c'était comme cela, on n'en parlait pas."

Gala actually was given a copy of the catalogue of the 1969 Eaubonne exhibition by André-François Petit. He explained:

"J'ai vu Gala à ce moment là [May or June 1969], car je voyais aussi bien Dalí que Gala. Elle a eu le catalogue entre les mains. Mais elle ne voulait pas parler de cela."

Curiously, therefore, the two remaining participants in the Eaubonne adventure (Eluard had died in 1952) had each in his own way buried -- or appeared to have buried -- all memory of the paintings. Or was it all memory of Eaubonne? According to Cécile, Paul Eluard himself never talked much about Eaubonne; she recalled:

"Il [Paul Eluard] évoquait certains souvenirs, mais pas tellement Eaubonne, je dois dire. Monlignon [Mrs. Grindel's home], ou d'autres choses, oui. On avait beaucoup de sujets de conversation, mais j'actualité c'était pour lui plus important que le passé."

Memory or not, the selling of the Eaubonne paintings could not be undertaken without the painter's willing participation. There had been no signatures on the walls of Eaubonne. To be offered for sale the transferred -- and for some, fragmented -- frescoes needed the painter's personal guarantee. Thus before the exhibition Ernst was asked to authenticate the works. Guyomard had to bring all the restored paintings for Ernst to sign, and a signature session was organized by Petit in his own house:
"Je les [the paintings] avais rassemblées chez moi car il y avait un grand tableau [Histoire Naturelle] qui ne passait pas par la porte de la Galerie. Il était venu rouler sur un grand cylindre qui avait un mètre de diamètre et, entre le moment où le travail a été terminé et l'exposition, les grands tableaux sont restés à mon domicile."

Ernst had been shown photographs of the removed works, first in black and white, then in color. The dummy of the catalogue which included, along with an introductory text, color reproductions of the paintings and selected poems and verses by Eluard had also been submitted to him. According to Petit, Ernst did not express much surprise when for the first time in forty years -- he saw again firsthand his paintings for Paul and Gala Eluard:

"Il était content de les revoir [the paintings], mais tout de même il les a regardées assez rapidement. Il connaissait les images par les photos. La mémoire avait fait son travail et quand il les a vues, il n'a pas eu l'impression de découvrir quelque chose."

Petit provided Ernst with brushes and paint, who then signed all the works restored by Guyomard and meant to be included in the forthcoming exhibition at the Galerie André-François Petit. Excluded from the catalogue, and therefore not signed, were:

- the "Door with the Hands," which Valette did not want to sell because of the extended repainting it had required;
- the two dismembered "Butterfly Doors" kept by Valette for his own use, and their matching body-stile, unrestored at that time;
- the tenth panel from Cécile's frieze, rejected by Valette and Petit, and not yet restored;
- and, of course, the "Flying Angel," still in the house in Eaubonne.
The "Door with the Hands" was eventually sold by Valette in the early seventies to the Galerie des Quatre Mouvements, with the understanding that the Galerie would be responsible for Ernst's signature. However this work was signed at an unknown later date. In some photographs, it appears unsigned; in others, Max Ernst's name is visible at the bottom right corner of the picture.

Concurrently with the organization of the show, Petit worked on a lavish catalogue in which all works for sale were to be reproduced in color photographs. Accordingly, titles had to be given to each of them and a preface written to explain the amazing recovery of the works. Patrick Waldberg was to do the introductory text, but the search for titles was left to Robert Valette. Valette's task in naming the Eaubonne paintings was then a challenge since he had to act as a substitute for Max Ernst. The painter was not asked -- and seemingly did not request -- to name his paintings; the proposed titles were simply submitted to him at the same time he was shown the dummy of the catalogue. Consequently, the present titles should not be subjected to an analysis on the assumption that they have a willfully planned relationship to the paintings.

Nonetheless, titles were always important to Max Ernst. From his first German collages to the captions of *La Femme 100 têtes* -- which can to some extent be thought of as titles -- Ernst's names for his paintings exude a sort of magic. Either riddles or puns, enigmas or verbal collages, they are always fascinating. Ernst himself obviously took pleasure in juxtaposing some of his strangest inventions, in juggling with them to form intriguing texts that he published in *Beyond Painting*. To read aloud these successions of words is indeed a poetic experience. As early as 1923, Aragon noticed Ernst's marked tendency to "caption" his works; he wrote:
"On ne peut pas passer sous silence les petits poèmes qui accompagnent les tableaux de Max Ernst. Ecrits en allemand et en français le plus souvent, plusieurs fois en anglais, ils sont non seulement le commentaire de la peinture, mais aussi son complément [...] Toutes ses œuvres sont baignées d'une clarté spirituelle qui met en colère les gens qui ont une idée arrêtée de la peinture moderne et qui ne veulent pas que l'esprit intervienne dans la peinture. Peinture littéraire, intellectuelle, disent-ils avec mépris [...] Aux confins de toutes les mythologies et de toutes les superstitions, Max Ernst emploie ainsi que les aspects extérieurs des choses, leur signification profonde qui lui arrive chargée de sens de toutes les parties du monde ..."14

Of course, Max Ernst has been asked very often how and where he found inspiration for his titles. In his answers he always insisted that the painting came before the title; title came only second and, sometimes, after a long period of time had elapsed. He explained:

"Jamais je n'impose un titre à un tableau: j'attends que le titre s'impose à moi. Après l'avoir peint, je reste souvent -- parfois longtemps -- sous la hantise du tableau, et l'obsession cesse seulement au moment où le titre apparaît comme par magie."15

This position was reaffirmed several times,16 and even given further explanatory remarks:

"If I had thought up a title in advance it would indicate that I had premeditated notion and that would make it a copy, so to speak. If there is a preconceived idea in my mind, then there is no need for me to make a note of it, for I believe in spontaneous painting."17

At the very least, the Eaubonne paintings had been spontaneous works; so spontaneous in fact that giving them a name forty-five years after their completion was an arduous task. Valette surely had in mind Ernst's poetic inventions when, rather logically, he decided to look for inspiration in Eluard's writings. Painter and poet had lived during the period of cohabitation in Eaubonne in an almost perfect
state of osmosis. Eluard's poetry may well have reflected, at least partially, some of Ernst's images, and those painted images could also have been related to Eluard's contemporary poems. Ultimately, Eluard's poetry provided Valette and Petit with supporting texts for the works reproduced in the catalogue and became the basis for at least thirteen of the titles given to fragments of the Eaubonne decoration. Although a conscientious substitute for the participation of Ernst himself, Valette's titles were not free from the risk of misunderstanding. A few problems have indeed arisen; they will be briefly examined below.

Only six works are actually named after writings published at a date earlier than or contemporary with the Eaubonne decoration. Except for the door Entrer, Sortir, these works all formerly belonged to Cécile's frieze. For instance, Cantique -- the title given to the small composition where a flying infant confronts a seemingly indifferent mother -- was originally the title of a very short piece published in Littérature (juillet-août 1920, no. 15, p. 1), then included by Eluard in Les nécessités de la vie in 1921. The four line poem reads as follows:

"L'enfant regarde la nuit de haut,
(Ne croyez pas aux avions, aux oiseaux,
Il est plus haut).
Si l'enfant meurt, la nuit prendra sa place." 18

Similarities between text and picture are indeed intriguing. Ernst, of course, knew all of Eluard's contemporary writings; but it is impossible to assert that the poet tried literally to illustrate this text. The influence of Eluard on Ernst was perhaps more subtle. Poetic images borrowed from Eluard's own repertory could very well have become Ernst's own through the unknowable meanders of memory. Similar correspondence can also be pointed out between the door Entrer, Sortir and the poem bearing the same title in Les nécessités de la vie. 19 The text makes reference both to a door ("La rue s'arrête ici et repart,
inconnue. La porte supprime la rue ...") and to a classical head motif
("Avenir. Tête fermée, Tête ancienne, Ancienne").

From Répétitions (1922), Valette has borrowed the title "Autant rêver d'ouvrir les portes de la mer." This is the last line of a poem entitled "L'ombre au soupir." Not all of the text can be related to the long panel showing the twin houses with their pairs of fishes and floating dummies which now bears this name; but Valette has been obviously stricken by the darkness which fills the two houses and which he has read perhaps as a threatening aquarium (the fishes?) or as a necessary watery environment for the strange levitation of the two human figures (foetal symbols?).

Three titles were chosen from Les Malheurs des Immortels (1922). Réveil officiel du serin and Conseils d'ami served as titles of short pieces in that collection of poems; Il n'y a plus de vraies hydrocyclusettes is a phrase belonging to "Des éventails brisés," another text included in the collection. In choosing the title Réveil officiel du serin, Valette has taken into account the presence in Ernst's picture of that strange blue flower about to become a bird ("serin" = canary); or is it a bird changing itself into a flower? In Conseils d'ami, Valette relied more on the text of the poem than its heading. Two lines: "Ramassez sous les chênes les taches de rousseur et les grains de beauté, Suivez en barque les troupeaux les jours d'éclipse ..." can be poetically compared with the picture in which a giant foot, rollerskating on a boat, seems to pursue a flower growing out of a flying rug, and where two little spheric forms (one green under the rug; the other red under the boat) can be understood in Eluard's own imagery as a beauty spot and a freckle.

Il n'y a plus de vraies hydrocyclusettes was actually the only title changed to please Max Ernst. When the painter was submitted the dummy of the catalogue, the title suggested by Valette for the panel showing the humorous duck and its little wheels was "Des éventails brisés,"
also the title of a poem from Les Malheurs des Immortels. Valette certainly had been more influenced by the motif of the blue fan in the picture than by the wheel apparatus. Ernst made the following comments:

"... Une seule remarque. Le titre éventailles brisées [sic] me semble un peu trop direct [par rapport au tableau]. Pas grave, mais réfléchissez et changez si possible ..."24

Il n'y a plus de vraies hydrocyclettes was then selected. Certainly less direct than the former proposal, it had the merit of emphasizing the amusing side of the picture. It is also worth noting that -- as said in Chapter I, p. 31 -- Ernst and Eluard's contributions to the text of Les malheurs des Immortels are extremely difficult to disentangle. The fact that the text "Des éventailles brisées" is the only one quoted by Ernst in Ecritures as a good example of "la fusion systématique des pensées de deux ou plusieurs auteurs dans une même œuvre"25 indicates how fond the painter must have been of this poem to which, perhaps, he had given more of himself than to the others.

All the other titles found by Valette and approved by Ernst belong to writings which came after the paintings. Les labyrinthes ne sont pas faits pour les chiens is, for instance, one of the "152 Proverbes mis au goût du jour" that Eluard wrote in collaboration with Benjamin Péret in 1925.26 Eluard's amusing play on the colloquial expression "les trottoirs ne sont pas faits pour les chiens" was perhaps selected by Valette because of Ernst's image of the woman and the horse driven to the wall, and incapable of communicating with each other, which may have reminded him of a dead-end situation or of a labyrinth's false exits.

Merveilles vous dansiez sur les sources du ciel is also the title of a poem included in Capitale de la Douleur, published in 1926. Eluard wrote it after he saw a spectacular show given by an American
company, the Gertrude Hoffmann Girls, which performed in Paris from January through March 1925. One of the music-hall numbers included flying trapeze and rope exercises, hence Eluard's title. Valette found it appropriate for describing Ernst's intriguing ceiling design, and indeed it is. Nevertheless, taken to the letter, this title has caused some serious misreadings (see Chapter IV, pp. 147-148). From *Capitale de la Douleur*, Valette also borrowed the title *Fin de circonstances*, which he gave to the small tableau (formerly in Cécile's room) depicting a sumptuous golden flower floating in the stream. The first three verses of the poem:

"Un bouquet tout défait brûle les coqs des vagues,  
Et le plumage entier de la perdition  
Rayonne dans la nuit et dans la mer du ciel ..."\(^{28}\)

would, perhaps, have applied better to the last image in the frieze, the one which is now entitled *Les oiseaux ne peuvent disparaître*. Curiously, however, Valette could not remember from where he borrowed the latter. A quick checking that he did on October 21, 1984, indicates that this title does not belong to Eluard. Valette now thinks that the title may have been inspired by Ernst's well-known identification with the bird.\(^{29}\)

The title given to the large panel with the pink female nude found in the living room comes from *A toute épreuve*, a collection of poems published by Eluard in 1930. Bearing number 10 in the book, the line *Il ne faut pas voir la réalité telle que je suis* was presented as a poem in itself.\(^{30}\) It is in fact a variation on the popular expression "Il faut voir la réalité telle qu'elle est." Eluard's intriguing phrase, mid-way between the pun and the "proverbe mis au goût du jour," became a sort of trademark for him. It was first published in *La Révolution Surréaliste* in 1929\(^{31}\) and was later reproduced in *Petite Anthologie du Surréalisme*. Eluard was apparently so fond of it that he himself reused it twice, in *La vie immédiate* (1932) and in *La jarre*
peut-elle être plus belle que l'eau? (1951). Although totally unrelated in time to the Éaubonne decoration, the line "Il ne faut pas voir la réalité telle que je suis" presents a sort of kinship with the ambiguous painting that Ernst did not disavow.

The odd panel with the feminine hand found in Gala and Paul's bedroom was named after a poem published in 1939 in Médieuses. There is again absolutely no possible link between Ernst's picture and Eluard's text, but both Valette and Petit agreed upon the fact that Au premier mot limpide was the most suitable title for the transferred fresco whose hand motif is both so conspicuous and so rich in interpretations. As for the remaining fragment of the destroyed composition formerly facing Au premier mot limpide, they chose the title Ici l'action se simplifie. The image, indeed, has been simplified, but the underlying humorous tone of this title — a sort of coded message for the initiated — is a radical departure from Eluard's poem, from which it is borrowed. "Ici l'action se simplifie" is the first verse of "Crier," a poem published in 1940 when World War II was well under way.

The monumental third panel found in the Eluard's bedroom, with its bizarre vegetation and odd animals was given a suitable Ernstian title, Histoire Naturelle. This was a sort of tribute paid to the painter by Valette and Petit, a way of giving him the last word since Histoire Naturelle had been one of Ernst's most famous inventions. When, in 1925, he began to assemble the works he had created with the recently discovered technique "frottage," he gave the general title Histoire Naturelle to both the exhibition and the book reproducing the works. These works were shown at the first Surrealist group exhibition, during the fall of 1925. Since then, Histoire Naturelle has become impossible to separate from both the name of Max Ernst and the term "Surrealism." As early as 1928, Crevel summarized the sort of osmosis which occurred between the name of the artist, his creations, and the movement to which at that time he still belonged:
"Max Ernst, sous le titre: Histoire Naturelle nous a présenté
les terribles merveilles d'un univers dont notre semelle ne
peut essayer d'écraser les secrets, plus grands que nous
[...] Et l'histoire du rêve, du miracle, l'histoire SURREELE
est bien comme l'a dit Ernst: UNE HISTOIRE NATURELLE."

Valette and Petit's initiative, later approved by Ernst, was
nevertheless to have confusing consequences for the hurried observer.
In her Introduction to the catalogue of the 1975 Max Ernst retrospec-
tive at the Guggenheim, Diane Waldman wrote: "In a characteristic
re-use of title, Ernst also called his frottage series of 1925 Histoire
Naturelle.” It is just the contrary: the Eaubonne panel was named
much later, and not by Ernst.

The "Door with the Hands," which was not included in the Petit
catalogue, remained untitled. If he had had a chance to name it,
Valette probably would have proposed the first line of this verse from
"Poèmes," a piece included in "Répétitions":

"La coeur sur l'arbre vous n'aviez qu'à le cueillir,
Sourire et rire, rire et douceur d'autre sens.
Vaincu, vainqueur et lumineux, pur comme un ange,
Haut vers le ciel, avec les arbres.”

According to Valette, Ernst, who knew this text, may have been influ-
enced by Eluard's poetic image of a heart hanging high above from a
tree. The third and largest hand, once a part of the door design,
but now only a small fragment, was called, without much imagination:
La main Verte.

J.C. Gateau sees three other parallels between some of Ernst's
Eaubonne paintings and poems by Eluard which, he thinks, preceded the
decoration; he writes:

"L'antériorité des poèmes ne se discute pas. Elle nous incline
à penser que trois autres panneaux de Max Ernst sont nés de
poèmes d'Eluard; la porte qui nous montre une femme aux yeux bandés accrochée à deux troncs bleu et vert serait à rapprocher de "Celle qui n'a pas la parole":

'Et la liane verte et bleue
qui joint le ciel aux arbres' 38

Un autre panneau représente un cheval bleu piéfiant devant un mur derrière lequel se tient une femme aux cheveux sombres, tandis qu'au loin s'éloigne un cavalier. Ne peut-on y voir l'écho du "Jeu de construction":

'L'homme s'enfuit, le cheval tombe,
La porte ne peut s'ouvrir." 39

Dernier rapprochement: le poème "La bénédiction":

'A l'aventure, en barque, au nord
Dans la trompette des oiseaux
les poissons dans leur élément' 40

a peut-être inspiré à Ernst l'étrange panneau où se distinguent, sur une oiseau-barque, une perruche multicolore, un poisson rameur et un hybride d'oreille et de saxophone, tandis qu'un poisson volant traverse le ciel." 41

It is difficult to agree totally with Gateau. The three poems he mentioned were all included in Mourir de ne pas mourir, a book that was published in March 1924 on the dawn of Eluard's voyage to the Far East. But only one of them ("Jeu de construction") can be dated with certainty since it had been previously published in Littérature; curiously, the two others seem to be totally new to the collection. Contrary to what Gateau thinks, they may very well have been suggested to Eluard by Ernst's images, which were already painted by mid-November 1923 (see Chapter II, p. 71). "Celle qui n'a pas la parole" and "La Bénédiction" could have been written during the winter 1923-1924, as was the poem "Giorgio de Chirico," composed during or after Paul and Gala's trip to Rome in December 1923-January 1924, which was also included in Mourir de ne pas Mourir.

Among the other pieces included in this book, there is a poem which has escaped the notice of Gateau and which seems to be directly
inspired by Ernst decoration for the house in Eaubonne. It reads as follows:

"Une couleur madame, une couleur monsieur,
Une aux seins, une aux cheveux,
La bouche des passions
Et si vous voyez rouge
La plus belle est à vos genoux."\footnote{43}

Eluard's three first lines seem to evoke the various color schemes of the house, and the Nude Gala and her red smile (see Chapter IV, p. 147). The last two lines may refer to the hand motif painted by Ernst in Gala and Paul's bedroom. A later correction has attenuated Eluard's first image; when published in \textit{Littérature} in October 1923,\footnote{44} the last line of the poem ("Et si vous voyez rouge La plus belle est à vos cuisses")\footnote{45} seemed a bolder allusion to the conspicuous female hand holding between two of its fingers -- which can also be read as female legs -- the famous red ball.

Restored, titled, and catalogued, Ernst's paintings for Gala and Paul Eluard were ready for a new public life. The show organized by André-François Petit opened in Paris, 122 boulevard Haussmann, on May 20, 1969 and lasted until the following 10th of July. Except for two rather long reviews in German, one published by Werner Spies,\footnote{46} the other by Günther Metken,\footnote{47} there was little or no reaction on the part of the French press. Asked why, Robert Valette explained:

"Il y a eu une sorte de barrage, une sorte de cabale contre les peintures d'Eaubonne lorsqu'elles sont apparues sur le marché [...] dus sans doute à des galeries concurrentes, à des jalousies. Au vernissage, tout le monde était un peu sur la réserve [...] Au moment de l'exposition, les gens disaient 'c'est très décoratif', 'ce n'est pas intéressant' ... Dans l'ensemble, le ton était aigre."\footnote{48}

The reactions of the Parisian media and art critics in 1969 is understandable. There was a strong competition between the galleries
and Petit was not perhaps powerful enough to oppose their coalition. The word may have gotten around, perhaps with no opposition from Max Ernst -- he did not for instance attend the opening of the show at Petit's -- that the murals had been removed, restored, and titled without the painter's participation. Interestingly enough, Petit never mentioned publicly Guyomard's intervention, and the restorer's name is not acknowledged in the exhibition catalogue. Asked why he was not acknowledged, Guyomard explained:

"Dans le catalogue, je ne suis même pas cité. Petit ne voulait pas que l'on parle de restauration, cela diminuait la valeur de ces oeuvres. Alors il y a eu une consigne de silence."49

Behind the chilly reception given to the Eaubonne paintings in 1969 there may be another possible explanation. The lack of enthusiasm encountered on the part of the public is perhaps due to the little knowledge it had at the time of Ernst's early methods of working. In the late 1960's, Ernst was mainly praised for his later technical innovations. Frottages, grattages, decalcomania were then looked for by collectors. With their sleek surface, their bright colors, their disconcerting flatness and apparent directness, the Eaubonne works entered none of these categories. Asked about the public's reaction at the time of the show, Guyomard answered:

"[The Eaubonne paintings] cela reste intellectuel. La technique picturale elle-même n'est pas inventive. C'est au niveau des idées que c'est intéressant [...] Et c'est sans doute pour cette raison que les acheteurs ont eu une réticence au début. Ils connaissaient le Max Ernst, grand inventeur pictural et dans les peintures d'Eaubonne ils n'ont vu que de l'imagerie."49

André Breton's judgement issued on November 11, 1923 after his first visit to Eaubonne showed very little clairvoyance as well. But his tone was even sharper and harsher than the average reaction encoun-
tered in 1969. After an evening spent at the Eluard's new home, he wrote to his wife Simone:

"La décoration dépasse en horreur toute ce que l'on peut imaginer. On se prend à regretter Boucher. A quoi rêvent les jeunes filles, les petits Saxes [...] Penser que la banlieue, la campagne vous cache de telles machinations. Je sais bien que si j'étais la foudre, je n'attendrais même pas l'été ..."

and he also added:

"Il est plaisant à dire, mais rigoureusement exact que la cave bien blanche où s'entasse du charbon bien noir est un lieu presque aimable, une folle presque belle sous cet invraisemblable chapeau à plumes."

Breton's 1923 opinion is amazing. Why did a so-called admirer of Ernst show so little appreciation? Was Breton finally so conservative in his tastes as not to understand the logic of unconventional decoration for an unconventional trio? An excerpt from the long text he devoted five years later to Ernst in Le Surréalisme et la Peinture brings, perhaps, a fragmentary answer. At least, this quote shows on the part of Breton a renewed open mindedness:

"Il n'est pas douteux que ces éléments, pris dans cette pièce, dans la campagne, au fond d'un atelier d'usine ou dans la mer ne sont pas tout à fait à la merci du geste humain qui, en tant que représentation, les confronte. Ceux d'entre nous qui ont assisté au développement de Max Ernst leur ont parfois vu prendre des attitudes hostiles, hurler de se trouver en présence. Il fallait, il était indispensable qu'il en fut ainsi. Ne convient-il pas, en effet, que l'horreur que nous procure les choses d'ici-bas ..., ne convient-il pas que cette horreur s'empare de nous à considérer certains épisodes du rêve de Max Ernst, qui est un rêve de médiation?"

The Eaubonne murals -- seldom seen and little appreciated in 1923-1924, in oblivion for forty years, boycotted by jealous dealers and cautious clients in 1969 -- were never given a real chance of
recognition. The death of Gala, the last of the trio, in 1982 and the inclusion in recent years of the three major frescoes in museum collections allow a closer approach to these works now and, perhaps, a better understanding of the intrinsic qualities of the Eaubonne cycle.
Chapter III

NOTES

1. According to the French law, the author of a work of art has the right ("droit moral") to control the use made of his work, especially when displacement (for public sculpture for instance) and dismantling (for decorations conceived as an ensemble) are involved.

2. A financial transaction was discussed and finally agreed upon between Valette and Petit, on the one hand, and Max Ernst, on the other hand. Valette, interview, November 13, 1984.


4. Ibid.


6. Ibid.


11. Ibid.
12. Robert Valette gave the following details:

"J'ai gardé très longtemps cette porte que je ne voulais pas vendre en raison des problèmes qu'elle nous avait posés. Et puis des marchands qui connaissaient son existence ont tellement insisté que j'ai fini par accepter de la vendre, mais je les ai prévenus: 'la porte est très repeinte, elle n'est pas signée, et Max Ernst ne l'a pas vue' [...] C'était la Galerie des Quatre Mouvemens. Je leur ai dit de se débrouiller quoi qu'il arrive avec Max Ernst. Ils l'ont donc emportée et sont allés voir Max Ernst qui a accepté de la signer" (Interview, November 13, 1984).

13. In *Beyond painting*, (p. 9), Ernst composed this text making use of several of his titles:

"In a country the color of a pigeon's breast I acclaimed the flight of 1,000,000 doves. I saw them invade the forests, black with desires, and the walls and seas without end.

I saw an ivy leaf float upon the ocean and I felt a very gentle earthquake. I saw a pale, white dove, flower of the desert. She refused to understand. Along the length of a cloud a superb man and woman danced the Carmagnole of love. The Dove closed herself in her wings and swallowed the key for ever.

A string lying on my table made me see a number of young men trampling upon their mother, while several young girls amused themselves with beautiful poses. [...]"

It was the beautiful season. It was the time of serpents, earth worms, plume-flowers, scale-flowers, tubular flowers. It was the time when the forest flew away and the flowers struggled under the water. The time of the circumflex Medusa [...].

Underlined are Ernst's titles. Another such example can be found in *Beyond Painting*, pp. 15-16.


18. Eluard, Oeuvres Complètes (referred to below as O.C.), I, p. 70.


22. O.C., I, p. 128.

23. O.C., I, p. 132.


27. O.C., I, p. 183.

28. O.C., I, p. 177.

30. O.C., I, p. 301.

31. La Révolution Surréaliste, 15 décembre 1929, n° 12, p. 23.

32. O.C., I, p. 911.

33. André-François, mentioning a work session that he had had with Valette about the titles, explained:

"Robert Valette a regardé dans les poèmes. Il cherchait des titres poétiques. Il avait dû déjà faire un choix de diverses possibilités. Au premier mot limpide, je me demande si ce n'est pas moi qui l'ai sélectionné. Ce titre m'intéressait beaucoup. C'était limpide comme le tableau ..." (Interview, October 23, 1984).

34. O.C., I, p. 1016.

35. René Crevel, Preface to Max Ernst's exhibition at the Galerie Georges Bernheim, 1-15 décembre 1928 (catalogue in Fonds Eluard, Musée d'Art et d'Histoire de la Ville de Saint-Denis).

36. Max Ernst, a retrospective, 1975, p. 32.

37. O.C., I, p. 108.


40. O.C., I, p. 146.

41. J.C. Gateau, Eluard et la peinture surréaliste, p. 87.
42. "Jeu de construction" was published in the January 1923 issue of Littérature (nouvelle série, n° 8, p. 6.7). Out of the twenty-eight poems included in Mourir de ne pas Mourir, sixteen had been previously published in Littérature, in January, May and October 1923. Neither "La Bénédiction," nor "Celle qui n'a pas la parole" were among them.

43. O.C., I, p. 152.

44. Littérature, nouvelle série, 15 octobre 1923, n° 11-12, p. 32.

45. See, for this "variante," O.C., I, p. 1362.


50. Ibid.


53. In 1975 Au premier mot limpide was acquired by the Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen in Dusseldorf; Histoire Naturelle was purchased in 1977 by the late Shah of Iran for the Museum of Modern
Art in Tehran, and in 1982 Il ne faut voir la réalité telle que je suis entered the collection of Centre Georges Pompidou, in Paris.
Chapter IV

THE EAUBONNE CYCLE:
VISUAL ANALYSIS, SOURCES,
AND INTERPRETATION

Ernst's Eaubonnn cycle, here reconstructed for the first time as it was before its removal from the walls of Eluard's house, is ready for a fresh visual analysis and, perhaps, a new interpretation.

During the past fifteen years interest has centered on a exegis of a few of the images. Isolated from their context, these images have been given partial and sometimes subjective interpretations. In most cases discussions have been developed without regard for the intrinsic qualities of these paintings and none of the authors was able to consider their link with the overall organization of the cycle.

The Eaubonnn decoration, born it seems of Ernst's sheer enjoyment of painting, is a sort of "catalogue within the catalogue" summarizing the painter's favorite themes and methods for working in 1923. This decoration must be understood as part of Ernst's personal repertory of images and, therefore, related to contemporary works done on canvas. Images at Eaubonnn and in contemporary works often have similar origins, obey the same organizational scheme, and share the same intellectual pattern.

A few of the Eaubonnn sources have been discovered by scholars who pursued a crucial comment first made by John Russel in 1960. Ernst's biographer had interviewed the painter about the making of La femme 100 têtes, his roman-collage dating 1929; he wrote:
"During the seven years which followed the publication of these two books, [Répétons and Les malheurs des Immortels], Max Ernst seems almost to have laid aside the idea of collage ... But, meanwhile, he had begun to investigate the quayside bookstalls by the Seine; among the heterogeneous lumber which these stalls had on offer he formed a particular fondness for the popular illustrated books and magazines of the later nineteenth-century. Over a long period he bought them up, one by one, and made a collection of plates which for one reason or another stirred his imagination. Some of them -- the Magasin Pittoresque, for instance -- had already a frenzied, rhetorical quality which could hardly be exaggerated further. What he really liked were plates more purely informative, more sober in their utterance, and more pedestrian in the march of their ideas [...]

A review which he liked enormously, for instance, was La Nature, which lived by exploiting two related phenomena: the development of wood-engraving and the demand for popular education. La Nature abounded in engravings of an instructive sort: painstaking, literal, earnest, and a shade naive."

Werner Spies' monumental inventory of Ernst's collages eventually proved the variety of sources from which the painter borrowed his inspiration. Famous works of art (Bellini, Titian, Dürer, Gustave Moreau, Flaxman), but primarily illustrations from scientific nineteenth-century French books and magazines, and popular pulp novels from the same period, had been used by Ernst over the years. The thorough deciphering of La femme 100 têtes by Charlotte Stokes further demonstrated the painter's attraction for La Nature and Le Magasin Pittoresque. Stokes also indicated the significance of scientific books such as Louis Figuier's Les Merveilles de la Science (1867-1891), in which she identified several sources for Ernst's work. Still other sources have been discovered by Stephanie Poley, namely intriguing eighteenth-century books such as Jean-Pierre Mariette's Description des travaux qui ont précédé, accompagné et suivi la fonte en bronze d'un seul jet de la statue équestre de Louis XV, le bien-aimé (Paris 1768), in which Ernst found several images that he transposed in two 1923 paintings, Sainte Cécile and Ubu Imperator. Finally, when dealing with
the Eaubonne cycle one should also keep in mind that Eluard had a fairly important library from which Ernst could draw inspiration.

Although Stoke's dissertation deals with collages done at a later date than the murals of Eaubonne, it is tempting to apply her method of research since La Nature supplied Ernst with sources for works anterior to his Parisian period. Several collages made in 1921 (Magicien, fig. 100-101 and Enfant, fig. 102-103, for example) or included in 1922 in Les Malheurs des Immortels (Plaisirs oubliés, fig. 104-105 and Mon petit Mont Blanc, fig. 106-107) made use of images or fragments of images from La Nature. Moreover, the 1922 Oedipus Rex is an enlarged transposition onto canvas of a small engraving found in the same magazine (fig. 108-109). By systematically investigating Ernst's likely sources of inspiration, I have found additional indisputable models; but this topic is far from exhausted. Ernst's images are so complex and so contradictory that there is still room for research.

Complexity and contradiction are often due to the transposition of details from nineteenth-century engravings into oil paintings. In Ernst's romans-collage, those engravings are easily recognized by a well-trained eye. But when transposed as wall size paintings, it is difficult in some instances to be totally positive about the source of an image. We have already mentioned that in his 1922 Oedipus Rex, Ernst has, for example, borrowed the central image from an illustration he found in La Nature (fig. 109). As such, the image is not intrinsically modified. The open nut and the fingers which hold it are identical to those in the engraving; they have simply been enlarged and set in a new context. But in the Eaubonne cycle, Ernst went a step further. He often masked his sources, blurred too obvious features, and introduced ambiguities which are now left for us to decipher.

Ernst himself, in Beyond Painting, provided a clue. Answering the question "What is the most noble conquest of collage?" he wrote:
"The irrational. The magisterial eruption of the irrational in all domains of art, of poetry, of science, in the private life of individuals, in the public life of people."

And he also added immediately:

"Do not forget this other conquest of collage: Surrealist painting [his underlining] in at least one of its multiple aspects, that which, between 1921 and 1924, I was the only one to develop..."5

When looking at the Eaubonne wall paintings, we must therefore keep in mind this idea of an underlying visual collage, of a hand-painted quotation, for as Ernst once humorously said: "Si ce sont les plumes qui font le plumage, ce n'est pas le colle qui fait le collage."7

As was done for the reconstruction of the cycle in Chapter II, the Eaubonne decoration will be analyzed level by level, and room by room. Although Uwe Schneede denies the fact that Ernst had an overall program,8 the color schemes and the dominant motifs found on each floor commend this approach. Emphasis will be put on some works whose intrinsic significance or quality merits extended consideration.

REZ-DE-CHAUSSEE

Of the previous rez-de-chaussée ensemble, I was able to study two pieces: the still in situ "Flying Angel" and Il ne faut pas voir la réalité telle que je suis, now in the collections of Centre Georges Pompidou, in Paris. My knowledge of the other works is dependent on the Petit catalogue, but enlightened by Hubert's photographs and a personal experience with the spaces involved.
1. The Three Murals on Golden Field

The links between the three compositions making use of a golden field have already been mentioned. Not only color, but subject matter tie these works together. The "Flying Angel" (fig. 110), **Il ne faut pas voir la réalité** (fig. 117) and **Merveilles vous dansez sur les sources du ciel** (fig. 112), all depict female figures in graceful attitudes -- dancers, or perhaps acrobats were chosen by Ernst to people this floor.

The "Flying Angel" shares with the pink nude of Merveilles the same open arm position. A similar curve arches their bodies. The interplay of white and pink tones, and the modeling in light and dark of the chin, of the raised arms, and of the torso are features common to both figures. When compared to the major nude of **Il ne faut pas voir la réalité**, the "Angel" also shows similarities. The same red smile animates the two faces otherwise in shadow or half hidden. Hair is given comparable treatment, and there is noticeable resemblance between them in the slenderness of the legs and the schematic rendering of the feet. The same type of observations can be made when looking at **Il ne faut pas voir la réalité**, and Merveilles. In both compositions Ernst uses a bisecting line to divide one of the silhouettes, and works with the same range of colors: pink, green, and brown.

But, in these three instances, the most striking element is the composition itself. For each of his pictures, Ernst has chosen a challenging space that he used in a very astute manner. The small entry hall, with its five doors and its stairwell (Plan IV), did not offer much room for decoration; Ernst nevertheless decided to work with the long and narrow space above the double door facing the entry-way. Curiously, despite the strong horizontality of the mouldings above, reinforced by the top line of the doors underneath, the golden field on which his creature flies seems limitless. With a simple interplay of curve and countercurve, Ernst has annihilated the flatness of the wall.
The open arms of his figure, reaching toward us and opposed at a right angle to the graceful arabesque of its body, break the boundaries which otherwise would have imprisoned the "Flying Angel."

The solution Ernst adopted for the ceiling of the séjour was not an easy one either. Usually ceiling decorations are stabilized and framed by real cornices or trompe-l'oeil devices. Ernst refused this traditional rule. On the contrary, he freed his composition from any visual anchoring. Even so, a sense of balance, of equilibrium dominates Merveilles. After a while, when the eye has repressed Guyomard's added circle (See Chapter II, p. 80), Ernst's rigorous organization appears. Two sets of equidistant vertical and horizontal lines act almost as an underlying grid. The vertical mast is echoed by the bisecting line cutting through the brown and purple silhouette, while the horizontal yard is repeated in the upper line of the hull. Twin diagonals (the sail line and the raised leg of the brown figure) and bracing curves (the left part of the hull opposed to the arched green body) add to the underlying geometry of the picture.

The intriguing composition and the clever use of the corner line conceived by Ernst for Il ne faut pas voir la réalité has already been discussed (Chapter II, pp. 78-80). Obviously, Ernst took pleasure in pushing his two figures to the far right instead of placing them in the center of the panel delimited by the west window and the casing of the former door. Again here we must imagine the large expanse of golden ground which previously extended to the left of the nude figure. By cropping the picture and centralizing the main element, Guyomard has given the composition a static character. The two figures in their identical stances -- one foot flat on the ground, the other about to move forward -- now look frozen for the lateral space into which they could once have moved forward no longer exists. Ernst, on the contrary, had conveyed to Il ne faut pas voir la réalité a sense of movement, of procession, as in a ballet when dancers appear from behind the scenes and stride toward the center of the stage. However, this feeling
of procession is soon dispelled by the flatness and strong verticality
of the green and brown silhouette. Although this is not apparent at
first glance, tension between the figures dominates this picture—
tension between the pink nude, who suggests motion to the left, and the
flat green and brown figure who holds her in place. Crucial for this
reading is the joining of the green and pink arms. The figures seem
visually locked together at this point, which is reinforced by the
touching of the green and pink feet below the image. The shadows too,
play a part in creating this tense image. The fleshy nude casts a
shadow which seems rather consistent, but her companion does not,
except when its right arm reaches the pink woman's face. Strangely,
there and only there does the flat mannequin block the light.

Why the theme of acrobats and dancers? None of Ernst's or
Eluard's biographers mentioned a special attraction of either one for
ballet. But circus, music hall, and "fête foraine" were very much in
fashion in the early twenties. Man Ray in his memoirs has described an
evening of July 1921 that he spent in Paris with the young Dadaists:

"Late in the afternoon Duchamp took me to a café in the
boulevards where the young writers of the Dada movement met
regularly before dinner. Half a dozen of men and a young
woman sat around a table in an isolated nook [...] We left
the café together and went to a little Hindu restaurant
nearby for dinner [...]"

Coming out of the restaurant we directed our steps toward
Montmartre ... where a huge and noisy amusement park had been
set up along its wide center as far as the eye could reach.
Elaborate merry-go-rounds, scenic railways, steam swings,
midget autos bumping each other, candy booths and side shows
outdid each other in the general cacophony ... Once I ven-
tured on the dizzy swings with the Eluards; we were violently
thrown upon each other and I wondered fleetingly whether they
sought a physical extension into the realm of strong sensa-
tions."

Such amusements may very well have been prized by Ernst as well.
Referring to Eluard's first trip to Cologne, J.C. Gauteau deciphered
Eluard and Ernst's letter to Tzara, dated November 7, 1921 (see Chapter I, note 77) as follows:

"Ce texte témoigne de la surexcitation des deux couples; peut-être de sorties au cirque, dans les dancings et les parcs d'attractions."  

Therefore both men may have enjoyed noisy circus parades, bright lights and performances involving dancers and acrobats in leotards. They certainly shared the same attraction for Gala's slender body. For this is Gala, in acrobat attire, who flies above the double door in the entry hall. It is again Gala who, raising her arm, smiled and welcomed the visitor entering the séjour. The shape of the head, the hair style, the smile, the proportions of the figure with its small breasts and long legs, are most surely those of Gala. Gateau does not even question the fact; giving the dimensions of Il ne pas voir la réalité, he calls it: "Un grand Nu de Gala."  

- Merveilles vous dansez sur les sources du ciel (fig. 112):

Two attempts have already been made to explain this picture. Werner Spies sees a prefiguration of the pink figure in the female silhouette depicted by Ernst in his little sketches illustrating "Le cas des jeunes femmes" (see Chapter I, fig. 31) and affirms without further explanation: "La partie de droite de la première illustration ['Et suivant votre cas'] constitue le modèle de base pour le tondo de Merveilles vous dansez sur les sources du ciel du cycle de tableaux réalisés pour la maison d'Eluard."  

The faint resemblance between these two figures seems more coincidental than intentional; moreover, it does not account for the other figures, nor for the boat motif.

More recently Etienne-Alain Hubert has stated that Ernst took his inspiration from a music-hall number presented by an American company, the Gertrude Hoffmann Girls, an act which, indeed, inspired a poem by
Eluard. Let us immediately note an impossibility. The Hoffman Girls performed in Paris from January 1925 to March 1925; that is, at a date when the cycle had already been painted and Ernst was no longer a member of the Eaubonne household. As for the poem, Eluard could, of course, have written it only after seeing the performance. The text leaves no doubt, but, as already noted, the theme incontestably appealed to the poet.

The idea of dancers and acrobats was perhaps suggested by Paul Eluard, but the image of the flying boat is Ernst's own. Up to now, nobody has questioned this image which is, in fact, the major motif of the ceiling fresco. The strange concept may very well have been inspired in Ernst by the experiments of the Jesuit François Lana, who in 1670 conceived a flying machine of the sort. His curious invention was supposed to fly with the help of four balloons and a sail. An article describing this experiment was published in *Le Magasin Pittoresque*, together with an illustration showing the four balloons, the rounded hull topped with a sail and a little flag flying above the mast (fig. 113). A similar engraving had also been reproduced by Louis Figuier in *Les Merveilles de la Science* (fig. 114), a book Ernst later used for the elaboration of *La femme 100 têtes*. Both pictures present common features which in turn can also be found in *Merveilles*. For his ceiling decoration Ernst has kept the rounded hull, the vertical mast and the little flag. He has also retained the idea of the four balloons, but adapted to his purpose so that only one formal balloon remains (the circle on the right) while the three others have become the rounded heads of his dancing creatures.

Ernst could have used many sources for the remaining three figures. Two are given here as examples, both from *La Nature* (fig. 115-116). Innumerable articles were devoted in this magazine to various acrobatic exercises or practices. The attitude of the "Flying Angel" belongs to the same stream of inspiration. Ernst may have looked at the illustration of an article, "Vélocipédistes acrobates,"
where (top row, second from the left — fig. 111) a tiny figure is seen in a very similar but inverted posture.

- **Il ne faut pas voir la réalité telle que je suis** (fig. 117):

Despite the silhouette in brown and green which may be understood as a sort of juggler, **Il ne faut pas voir la réalité** has sources other than acrobats and dancers. The image of a woman with apparent inner mechanisms can be traced back to Ernst's early photomontages in Cologne. In the 1921 *Anatomie jeune mariée* (fig. 118) there appeared for the first time the disturbing image of the open body of a mannequin lying in a sort of bathtub. The same year Ernst worked on this theme again. Both the photo-montage *Santa conversazione* (fig. 119) and a related drawing *La belle jardinière* (fig. 120), show a female body — this time standing — whose abdominal cavity is wide open. In both a secondary figure has been added. **Il ne faut pas voir la réalité** and the famous painting *La Belle Jardinière* (fig. 121), both dated 1923 (although it is not known which one came first), are the logical developments of Ernst's previous endeavor in Cologne.

The comparison of these last two paintings proves interesting. *La Belle Jardinière*, a painting now believed to be lost, measured 196 x 114 cm. Present measurements of **Il ne faut pas voir la réalité** are 175 x 80 cm. Thus, both are fairly large; the two pictures also share the same strange coupling of a fleshy female nude with a flattened, dematerialized companion. Although both nudes are inspired by Gala — her dark hair, almond shaped eyes and oval face are also clearly recognizable in *La Belle Jardinière* — their direct sources are different. *La Belle Jardinière* with its lung shapes and its white dove concealing part of the open belly is the obvious offspring of the Cologne images. The nude Gala of Eaubonne pertains to another tradition, that of the anatomical model, of the écorché. Diane Waldman sees the skeletal figure as "inspired by such works as Diderot's encyclopedia or the diagrams of Baldung-Grien (fig. 122)." More likely Ernst looked at
Armand-Eloi Gautier d'Agoty's anatomical charts that perhaps Eluard had in his personal library. Gala's open abdomen, emblazoned and triangular like a shield, comes very close to a 1773 engraving by D'Agoty depicting "L'Anatomie des Parties de la Génération de la Femme" (fig. 123). Ernst's figure has the raised left arm and the intriguing little muscles, which resemble a string of beads and extend upward on the woman's flank, found in d'Agoty's engraving; but the use of color in Ernst's painting has made the open belly passage an ambiguous zone where the exterior surface is still present. Ernst's curvilinear shapes -- totally internal in d'Agoty's plate -- can be read as on or within the woman's belly. The color given to the breasts, the purple arcs between the breasts and the heart-shaped triangle over the pubic area add to this equivocal reading.

Even more ambiguous is the companion figure which stands behind the nude Gala. Because of the protruding breast and the graceful attitude, it may be understood as a feminine silhouette. But there are also hints of masculinity in the rounded and hairless head, in the verticality of the figure, and in the strong affirmation of the green and brown areas as opposed to the sinuous body and pink flesh of Gala. By giving to the lateral breast a darker tone than to the rest of the body, Ernst himself has introduced the idea that it could be a feminine appendage grafted on a male body. Curiously enough, in handling his familiar theme of the woman with the open womb, the painter has oscillated in his choice of the secondary figure. Obviously female in Santa conversazione (see fig. 119), male beyond all question in the painting La Belle Jardinière (see fig. 121), has it become a dual being in Il ne faut pas voir la réalité telle que je suis? Ernst's use of flattened male mannequins associated with female images can be traced back to his early collages in Cologne. Die Anatomie Selbdritt (fig. 124) and Femme oiseau (fig. 125), both dated 1921, combine these two representations. In the latter, female and male characteristics are accentuated by the fleshy quality of the woman's image and by the vertical dividing line cutting through the male silhouette in a place where the male sex
usually stands. Later works repeated that solution, and *Il ne faut pas voir la réalité telle que je suis* should perhaps be understood as one of them.

The large ink and wash drawing *Une homme peut en cacher un autre* (fig. 126), dated 1923 by Werner Spies, is also part of this lineage, and must have been a seminal image for the Eaubonne fresco.¹⁹ The two works are contemporary, they both make use of flattened figures with rounded heads and vertical dividing lines. Two features in the drawing on the male silhouettes -- a glove and a sock -- are also present on the fresco, slightly amended. The green and brown figure in *Il ne faut pas voir ...* has been given a darker line above the knee on its right leg that one tends to read as a high sock or a stocking; its right hand is partially concealed under a darker color which is immediately understood as a glove or a mitten of some sort. In these two pictures, not only accessory details offer similarities, but the outlines of the flat silhouettes come very close to each other from waist to toe. Male in *Un homme en peut cacher un autre*, the flat silhouette in *Il ne faut pas voir ...* is, by virtue of its added breast and its graceful attitude, both male and female. Could Gala's companion be an androgyne?

Born in ancient Greece,²⁰ and revived in the nineteenth century²¹ the myth of the androgyne -- the man/woman -- is often present in Surrealist literature and painting. Ernst in the years 1923-1924 was one of the first to illustrate the old myth of this unified but dual human being. Several works, contemporary with the Eaubonne cycle, deal more or less directly with this theme. A picture such as *Le couple* (fig. 127), also painted in 1923, has been analyzed by Xavière Gauthier as an equivocal image of that sort.²² In this instance, the two figures depicted have been given by Ernst dual characteristics. Another painting from 1924 and also titled *Le couple* (fig. 128) shows "the joining of male and female figures" and pertains, according to Whitney Chadwick, to the same inspiration.²³ But Ernst's most thorough expression of the androgyne myth remains the 1923 *Les hommes n'en
sauront rien dedicated to André Breton (fig. 129). In this image, the coupling of male and female principles in a single being has reached perfect balance. In the little poem that he wrote on the reverse of the canvas, Ernst explained:

"... Le tableau est curieux par sa symétrie
Les deux sexes se font équilibre."

And there is, indeed, a perfect but ambiguous correspondence of man and woman anatomy (the legs being alternatively read as male and/or female) and a total interpenetration/superposition of phallus and vagina, coupled with a wonderful allegory of human harmony.\textsuperscript{24} \textit{Il ne faut pas voir la réalité telle que je suis} is not as perfect an illustration of the androgyne myth as \textit{Les hommes n'en sauront rien}, but it should be nevertheless understood as one among several aspects this myth took under Ernst's brushes in 1923.

But the symbolism of \textit{Il ne faut pas voir la réalité} is not limited to this one reading. In addition, there is the womb image understood as the source of life and art. As noted by Whitney Chadwick, "birth and womb imagery, a stunning metaphor for the process of creative art, pervade Surrealist painting and writing."\textsuperscript{25} Perceived as muse and mediator, as inspiration for male creativity and actual generator of life, the Surrealist view of woman is often conflicting. Interestingly enough, Chadwick sees in the recurrence of themes such as Pygmalion, the myth of the androgyne and Oedipus and the Sphinx, a revealing manifestation of "Surrealism's continuing attempts to resolve artistically some of the issues surrounding the polarization of the female image and the conflict between male and female creativity."\textsuperscript{26} The coupling in \textit{Il ne faut pas voir la réalité} of both the androgyne theme and the womb image is perhaps Ernst's best illustration of his conception of the role of the artist: "to assist like a spectator at the birth of the work."\textsuperscript{27}
Besides being an image of the duality of male and female principles, and an allegory of creativity/fecundity, the Nude Gala also belongs to the long series of Ernst's works dealing with the theme of blindness. Gala is shown here with her face partially concealed and her vision blocked by the right arm of her companion figure whose eyes, in turn, have been given piercing colors (red and blue). The fixity of this gaze reminds us of that of a "voyant," of a medium engaged in some dialogue with a realm beyond. Lucy Lippard has given some thought to the blindness theme in Ernst's oeuvre. According to her, "blindness is associated with darkness, inner vision and female sexuality."28 She has also noted that "if head represents rationality and the male, women are associated not only with blindness but with more literally internal mechanisms,"29 both characteristics actually found in Il ne pas voir la réalité. But this is not always so. Two paintings, dating 1923, also represent women with blocked vision. This time they are not associated with womb images, but imprisoned by a terrifying machine (La femme chancelante, fig. 131) or by indestructible brick walls (Sainte Cécile, fig. 132). Charlotte Stokes interprets Ernst's obsession with blindness as a means of self-revelation. She writes:

"Blindness is a metaphor for a limitation and focusing of an artist's receptivity, freeing his mind from the unnecessary detail of the visible world so that the sights of the inner world can become visible also."30

The fact is that in several of his autobiographical notes, Ernst has emphasized the importance he always gave to sight, that is, to the sight of the inner eye.31

Il ne faut pas voir la réalité telle que je suis, with its underlying symbolism and its multiple layers of meanings is undoubtedly the richest picture of the entire Enaubonne cycle. One must go beyond its seemingly graceful appearance to understand the complexity of the image.
2. The Two Painted Doors

The similar lay out of the two doors belonging to the rez-de-chaussée has been briefly pointed out (Chapter II, p. 88); not only the tree-like shapes that they both have in the background, but their overall reference to Chirico and the fact that each of them deals with a theme central to Ernst's oeuvre link them even more clearly.

- **Entrer, Sortir** (fig. 133):

Seemingly clutching the slender trunk of a blue tree, a woman in a bikini turns her head towards us. Her hair is curly and she wears blue sun glasses. Her attitude is somewhat contrived and the general stiffness of her body reminds us of those mannequins whose arms, head, and legs can be moved and rearranged for the purposes of the painter. The scale of the composition seems rather consistent until one discovers that the figure is holding in her left hand the minuscule body of a naked woman. The system of proportion governing the door motif is suddenly overturned, as is the reading of the figure as a female image. The green band covering part of the figure's torso that first appeared to be a brassiere, is now read as a mere cloth over a manly rib-cage. Could the "bikini lady" be a giant man? The search for sources is frustrating. One first thinks of possible similarities with seventeenth century engravings depicting physical abnormalities, such as Athanasius Kircher's "Gigantis skeleton," fig. 134 (Mundus Subterraneus, Rome, 1665), but could Ernst have seen this particular engraving? It is difficult to be totally certain.

On the other hand, Ernst was surely acquainted with Renaissance images, given the artistic training he had received in Bonn. Michelangelo's *Risen Christ* (fig. 135) suddenly comes to mind as the obvious model for Ernst's "bikini lady." In both works the general posture of the body is very similar -- Ernst has only accentuated the hip-swaying of the figure, as if to make it provocative. The uneasy arm gesture
of Michelangelo's Christ has been transferred by Ernst to his figure. Christ's right hand clutching the cross is still present in Ernst's own image, but the cross has been replaced by a blue tree trunk. Curiously -- and this is perhaps the most striking resemblance between the two works -- Ernst has kept and emphasized Michelangelo's optical illusion of the cross bulging in the area of Christ's hands. In Michelangelo's sculpture, this visual illusion is due to the juxtaposition of the rectilinear contour of the cross with the slight sway of the reed stick that Christ holds together with the instruments of his Passion in his left hand; on Ernst's door, the stick is gone and the figure has relaxed its left hand, but the tree trunk still conveys the idea of a swelling form.

The motif of the tiny naked woman is not new either. It can also be seen in Femme, vieillard, et fleur, a contemporary work by Ernst (fig. 136). It is difficult to say which of the two motifs came first. It is known that the painting was totally reworked in 1924, but the little naked figure was already included in the first version, dated 1923 by Spies (fig. 137). In both pictures the male figure who holds the naked woman has been analyzed as a representation of Ernst's father. Is it possible to extend such a reading to the Eaubonne door? More than a paternal representation, Ernst's door design appears as a blasphemous reference to his father's taste and life. One has only to remember the strict Catholic atmosphere in which Ernst was brought up as a child; one must also keep in mind the portrait Philipp Ernst made of his son Max in 1896 (fig. 138). The young Max, then five years old, is pictured as the Christ child holding the cross; he is framed by two angel heads, and surrounded by a golden aura. Twenty-six years later, Philipp Ernst's dream has undergone dramatic changes: the Christ has grown up, he has exchanged his cross for an inviting naked woman and traded in his ample garment for a burlesque costume.

The giant figure raises other analogies. The first one brings into light the pervasive influence of Chirico. The figure's head has
an obvious classical accent. It evokes Greek statues -- and Chirico has often used severed classical heads in his paintings. The 1914 Canto d'Amore (fig. 139) is a typical example. The fact that Ernst has introduced a change in color in the area of the neck reinforces the analogy. The head of his figure looks added to Michelangelo's Christ image. The sun glasses device and the use of dotted lines (thigh and knee areas) bring Ernst's creation even closer to Chirico. In two works dated 1914, The Dream of the Poet (fig. 140) and Portrait of Guillaume Apollinaire (fig. 141), Chirico has depicted an ancient marble head which he ornamented with sun glasses. On a dark silhouette, in the background of these two pictures, white dotted lines are visible. The alliance of the sculpted head and the glasses, along with the reference to Guillaume Apollinaire -- hence to poetry -- has been transferred by Ernst to his door motif, also painted for a poet, his friend Paul Eluard. Is Entrer,Sortir a disguised portrait of Eluard? Or, more likely, is it Ernst's own version of "the dream of the poet," and perhaps also his salute to Chirico, whose work hung in the same room? 33

Entrer,Sortir also numbers among the many works by Ernst dealing with the theme of blindness. Already mentioned in regard to Il ne faut pas voir la réalité, the blindness motif is again evoked on this door panel. Behind his dark glasses, which singularly resemble a bandage, Ernst's giant figure cannot see.

- "The Door with the Hands" and La main verte (fig. 142-143):

In visual analyzing these two works, it is imperative to bear in mind their original appearance -- that is, before their dismemberment (See Chapter II, pp. 84-86). The progression in size of the three hands, and their repetition, are crucial to the understanding of Ernst's design.
Starting from the bottom of the door, three hands --- identical in their shape --- follow each other up to the space above the door. Blue in the lower part, pink in the middle, and green on the overdoor, the three hands have similar finger positions and have been given the same white cuff over the wrist. Severed from the body to which they once belonged, they seem to vibrate like butterflies in search not of flowers but a green heart hanging up above them. The symbolism is fairly clear: three hands reaching for the same love or, perhaps for the same "forbidden fruit."

The intensifying rhythm of the hand motif is echoed by that of the tree-like forms in the background. Slender and barren at the bottom of the door, these forms become more complicated, more diversified as they rise toward the top. Before reaching the top moulding the purple trunk splays into a network of small branches; from one of these is suspended the green heart. The yellow tree goes through more radical transformations. In the middle area of the door, it suddenly changes direction and explodes into branchings and growths which eventually turn into strange fruits. A red line which runs up the purple trunk seems to nourish the yellow tree with a sap-like liquid which drops into the cup crowning it. The green heart as well with its small black arrows indicating diverging directions, calls to mind blood vessels, inner circulation, or an anatomical configuration. Ernst must have based his design on some kind of scientific model. More or less similar motifs were very current in the production of his Cologne years, when he was looking at or literally borrowing from the Lehrmittel catalogue.

The hand motif, too, seems fairly familiar but its source is not in earlier works. Although several collages in Répétitions and Le Malheur des Immortels showed hands engaged in various activities, none of them can be said to have inspired the door motif of Eaubonne. Ernst lifted his motif from an illustration he found in La Nature describing an experiment on fluid capillarity and density (fig. 144). The pink hand in the middle zone of the door still slightly hints of the glass
15. *La Nature*, sample of title page, 1886
(reduced format)
it held in Poyet's illustration. A blue-grey form which resembles the
glass stem is still visible under the little finger, and a white line
above the thumb can be interpreted as a reference to the water which
once poured from the glass. Ernst's three hands have kept the original
cuff, but lost their frame so that they now move freely, devoid from
all reference to their previous existence.34

The theme of the hand is central to Ernst's oeuvre. Biographical
data may explain the painter's fascination for this motif. His father
was a teacher for deaf and dumb children, and Ernst as a child must
have been familiar with the hand language his father used with his
pupils. In this system of conversation, the hand becomes the means and
focus of all exchanges replacing sounds and facial expression. It is
from this perspective that the 1922 Au rendez-vous des amis (fig. 145)
must be understood. Each of the participants seems to be giving
silent, visual messages with his hands. According to a nineteenth
century French alphabet for deaf and dumb (fig. 146), Eluard's hand
position is the sign for the letter "E." E for Eluard, perhaps.35

The hand motif runs through Ernst's works of the twenties and
early thirties as a leitmotif that could have been reinforced since
the beginning by the influence of de Chirico and Tzara. Chirico,
between 1913 and 1919, often used hand or gloves motifs (Canto d'Amore,
already mentioned, is but one of these examples). Hand symbols were
also common in Dada publications where Tzara used them as "eye-
catchers" (fig. 147). Writing about Ernst's hand obsession Spies
noted:

"La main, des doigts en position de tenir quelque chose, des
doigts montrant quelque chose sont souvent les dramatis
personae des collages, dessins et tableaux du début des
années vingt."36

He also added:
"Les mains agissent comme détachées du corps, elles possèdent une autonomie que l'on peut parfaitement prendre pour un symbole de l'automatisme, qui devient une véritable doctrine à l'époque des 'somnambules', dans le mesure où il illustrait une sorte de cécité."\(^3\)

Blindness, as source of inspiration, coupled with expressive hand gestures, are precisely the symbols which Ernst used to decorate the two doors of Eaubonne.

PREMIER ÉTAGE

The striking difference in mood and motifs between the \textit{rez-de-chaussée} and the \textit{premier étage} has already been mentioned. The ground floor was lightened by a golden color; it had the warmth of the sun and the brightness of day. The \textit{Premier étage} was the realm of night and dream. This change in turn was indicated by the flying insect watching over Gala and Paul's floor -- an enormous moth.

1. The Butterfly/Moth motif (fig. 148):

The relationship of the motif itself to its architectural support has been considered in Chapter II. One must imagine the opening and closing of the doors, which surely had been calculated by Ernst to give the illusion of the movement of a butterfly. But was it really a butterfly? In my search for sources I found in \textit{La Nature} and in \textit{Le Magasin Pittoresque} numerous articles dealing with different varieties of lepidoptera, but only one variety actually came close to Ernst's own representation. Belonging to the category of the \textit{Attacus}, it is a moth called "Atlas" or more commonly, in French, "grand paon de nuit" (huge peacock butterfly). Both the illustration reproduced in \textit{Le Magasin Pittoresque} (fig. 149) and the matching text may have inspired Ernst. The engraving was of course in black and white, but the author of the article described at length the shape of the wings and their beautiful colors:
"L'Atlas est le plus grand des attacs et de tous les papillons. Il a seize centimètres de largeur ... Son corps paraît petit par rapport à l'immensité de ses ailes. Il est d'un roux fauve. Sa tête est surmontée de deux antennes barbelées comme de petites plumes. Les ailes supérieures, élégamment recourbées en forme de faucilles à leur extrémité, sont d'une couleur ferrugineuse, traversées longitudinalement par une bande blanche ondulée et bordée intérieurement de noir. En dedans de cette bande blanche se trouve une tache triangulaire, transparente, cernée de lignes noires. Un trait noir sinueux court parallèlement au contour de l'aile.

Les ailes inférieures diffèrent peu des supérieures. On y voit la même bande blanche et la même tache transparente, de forme triangulaire, sur un fond roux."

I was able to study the two remaining doors in their present state. Similarities of the motif with the above description are surely more than coincidental. First of all, the size of the motif itself reminds us of the huge dimension of the "paon de nuit." Not only the curved shape that the painter has given to the upper wings of his insect, but the range of colors he used echo that described in the article: dark orange/red areas, undulating white lines contrasting with a black zone, triangular spots — transparent according to the text, but translated as white by the draughtsman Freeman and, after him, by Ernst.

A creature of the night — and certainly understood as such by Max, Paul and Gala — the moth was also an appealing motif for the little Cécile, who shared the floor with her parents. Ernst's rendering of the insect is very literal. It has the directness of an illustration from a children's book. No added details, no disquieting distortions were there to disturb the little girl. Its simplicity of execution reminds us of Le singe bleu à la fleur, a charming painting made the year before (fig. 150). Dated 1922 and dedicated "à mon amie la belle petite Cécile," it represents a monkey face with huge staring eyes. Although very different in scale, Singe bleu and the "Butterfly Doors" share the same frontal portion, the same flatness; in both, the
central motif occupies almost all the painted space with the same serenity and confidence.

2. Paul and Gala's Bedroom Decoration

Beyond the boundary established by the serene "grand paon de nuit" extended Gala and Paul's quarters. Designed to enclose their bed (see Chapter II, pp. 92-93), Max Ernst's decoration referred this time not to a child's imagery, but to the adult world transposed according to the painter's personal vision and symbols.

Of the three remaining elements — Ici l'action se simplifie, Histoire Naturelle, and Au premier mot limpide — I was only able to see the latter, now owned by the Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, in Dusseldorf. Even knowing the dimensions of the picture, and familiar with the space it once occupied in the house in Eaubonne, one is still surprised by the imposing size of Au premier mot limpide (fig. 151). It is nevertheless easy, when looking at the transposed work, to visualize the location of the head of the bed which in fact concealed very little of the picture.

Close inspection of this fresco is extremely revealing of Ernst's artistic procedure. Numerous pencil lines are still visible under the thin superficial layer of oil paint. Ernst's underdrawing is very sure; there are no apparent marks of hesitation. The lines which delimit the long stem on the right of the composition or the illusionistic recessed corner line acting as a margin also on the right, seem perfectly straight, as if drawn with the help of a ruler. Intermittent pencil lines are also apparent along the two windows; in places where they have disappeared one can guess repaintings; perhaps by Guyomard. Interestingly enough, Ernst had in mind to add on the long brown stem on the right, just underneath the cast shadow of the existing red ball, two other balls, one big and one small overlapping on each other. His underdrawing, which he did not carry on to completion, is still per-
fectly readable. Only partially visible are the lines delimiting the artichoke-like forms, the green insect and the hand. For the latter, traces of pencil remain on the upper part of the thumb. Losses in the underdrawing may indicate restorations by Guyomard. Cast shadows are consistent with light from the upper left -- a position which coincides with the actual northern window which formerly stood on the left edge of the composition.

Ernst's handling of the paint is also clearly understandable. In many places the blue coat that he applied throughout the room shows through the added decoration. The underlying presence of the blue is particularly noticeable on the hand motif -- though overworked compared to other passages in the picture -- and on the brick-colored wall as well. Ernst's brushwork is very light and delicate on the hand motif, on the two artichoke heads, and on the green insect. His strokes follow the general layout of the forms. On the hand they are laid parallel to the direction of the fingers. On the artichokes, in order to build convincing modeled shapes, he used a quick, tiny hatching system with several overlapping nuances of green inside each and every leaf. Elsewhere, especially on the dark-orange wall, he has worked with a larger brush.

The paintings Au premier mot limpide and La femme chancelante (fig. 131) as they hang side by side in Dusseldorf, lend themselves to an interesting comparison. Although painted in the very same year, and La femme chancelante probably in Eaubonne as well, the two pictures greatly differ in their surface texture. Painted on canvas, La femme chancelante appears crusty. Ernst has worked over and over his image with a thick paste. With the passage of time the surface has somehow deteriorated; infinitesimal cracks have developed, especially on the white areas in the lower middle part of the picture. The transferred fresco, on the contrary, shows a very thin layer of paint quickly applied on the blue ground. Obviously, after having chosen his motifs and conceiving the overall organization of each room decoration, Ernst
did not spend much time on the execution itself. The immensity of his
task may have worked against refinement of the works and attention to
minute details.

Unfortunately, the other major fresco in Paul and Gala's room,
Histoire Naturelle (fig. 158), is not accessible to the viewer. It
seems nevertheless reasonable to assume that both its surface, and the
technique involved are similar to the ones just described. As for Au
premier mot limpide, a study with the naked eye would surely reveal
underdrawing and perhaps pentimenti. Identical motifs and colors
suggest that Ernst worked on both walls at the same time. Concept,
iconography, colors, size and symmetry link not only these two fres-
ccoes, but also the third dismembered panel mentioned in Chapter II.
Conceived as a tripartite entity, they should be understood and studied
in this way.

Again, one has to remember the presence of two real doors in the
space enclosing Paul and Gala's bed (Plan VII). Ernst had to start
his composition with these two given openings of different sizes.
Undoubtedly he built his trilogy around them. As such, the bathroom
door and the large entry door were obtrusive elements. To make them
part of the painted décor he had to create visual equivalents to coun-
terbalance their importance. One of Ernst's solutions, the creation of
a third trompe-l'oeil door, has already been discussed (Chapter II, p.
93). Another astute invention was to design on the northern panel (Au
premier mot limpide) a wall echoing the wall included in Histoire
Naturelle and two fake openings counterbalancing by their unequal sizes
the two doors — one real and large, the other false and small — which
they faced on the opposite wall. Implied symmetry did not stop there.
Ernst also played an ambiguous game of illusionistic recesses, of false
perspectives, of impossible spaces, like the ones supposedly hiding
behind the red wall of Au premier mot limpide or the false door of the
dismembered third panel. A consideration of Hubert's photographs is
fundamental (fig. 159) in understanding that the red wall of Au premier
mot limpide, which seems so conspicuous when this fresco is dissociated from its two companion pieces, is just one element among the other parts of the overall design. Its role is equalled by that of the brick wall in Histoire Naturelle, whose height and mysterious presence -- one would like to look through its open window -- are also strongly felt. Balanced rhythms are also part of this trilogy. The massive central post of Histoire Naturelle acts as a dividing point. On each side of it, in the new spaces thus delimited, repetitive elements and equivalent symbols compete to catch our attention. The three doors in the southeast corner are echoed by the verticality of the three long artichoke-like plants in the northeast area. The garden open space visible to the left of the post is counterbalanced by the mysterious enclosed space on its right. The painted hand popping out of the window on the north panel can be challenged at any moment by the human hand of someone entering the room on the other side. Ernst has organized his trilogy in such a manner that the similarities and contrasts to be found within it are almost endless.

Ernst's mastery of the space and themes involved in Eaubonne is the result of prior experimentations, some of them partial solutions worked on over a period of several years. Au premier mot limpide is repeatedly compared with the 1922 Oedipus Rex (fig. 108); a large hand protruding from a window appears in both pictures. The composition of Histoire Naturelle very greatly resembles a lesser known work, Dada Gauguin (fig. 160), done in 1920 during the Dada days in Cologne. The Eaubonne fresco is, of course, out of scale if compared to the small Cologne collage, but curiously the two works have in common their major structural features. Both are organized around a central, vertical element. On the left of this element is found in both pictures a similar green, vertical artichoke form. On the right, the idea of enclosure is either implied (Dada Gauguin) or actually depicted (Histoire Naturelle). The same observation can be made about the lost composition formerly on the south wall. A pervasive feeling of déjà vu seizes us when looking at Hubert's photograph (fig. 179). But more is
to be seen than just a general resemblance — there is similar play with recessed walls, with vertical lines and planes opposed to a diagonal stick. Although we do not know if it was painted before or after the Eaubonne program, Sentiments mêlés (fig. 180) is — like the third panel in Gala's room — a painter's exercise in dealing with these problems.

That Ernst used earlier solutions and themes for his triology is a certainty. But he also had recourse to more direct sources. Charlotte Stokes discovered the illustration which became the leading element of Au premier mot limpide. It is a small engraving reproduced in a 1881 issue of La Nature (fig. 153) to accompany an article entitled "Illusion du tact" and describing a well known phenomenon of sense perception. When held between two crossed fingers, a single ball is perceived as two balls, for the external sides of two adjoining fingers usually do not come into contact with the same object. Ernst quoted the image literally. As in his model, he has also isolated and framed the hand motif. The position of the fingers in his fresco is identical to that in the small engraving, but by elongating the crossed index and second finger, by giving them longer nails, and above all by emphasizing the small wrinkle at the start of the first phalanxes, he has totally distorted the meaning of the image. It is no longer an anonymous male hand. It has become an ambivalent motif perceived both as a female hand and as the symbolization of female legs and pubic area.

Stokes also pointed out another likely source for Ernst's insects tied with a string and a ball, which he depicted not only in Au premier mot limpide but in Histoire Naturelle as well. In the same bound volume of La Nature, just pages before the article on the "Illusion du tact," a study was published on the strength of insects. Experiments were described in which the muscular strength of cockchafer's and dragonflies had been tested by weights attached to their bodies (fig. 154). Stokes comments: "the sadistic aspect of this
attachment as well as the incumbrance of the weights themselves are
exploited in Ernst's image.**

More than the sadistic aspect or the incumbrance of the weights—which are almost totally lost in the immensity of the frescoes—what Ernst has exploited here is the impossible encounter of two different realities. With the knowledge of Ernst's visual mechanisms, as he described them in his famous account of his discovery of collage, it is easy to understand how the painter "piled up on each other" and made them meet "in a new unknown" the two images of the ball, one a marble being held between two fingers, the other a waxball suspended from a dragonfly. When looking carefully at the two illustrations from La Nature, one is struck by the great resemblance between the two objects whose texture is different in reality but whose rendering in the medium of a wood engraving is similar. Almost equivalent in size, the two balls show the same dark and light areas and the same system of concentric ridges meant to translate their sphefic shape. Ernst has made two balls into only one, which now links his two sources. Eventually he disguised the sources themselves. The manly hand has become a never-before-seen female hand; the dragonfly has been transformed into an impossible hybrid insect. Both hand and insect are coupled for eternity in the strange setting that Ernst invented for them.

The article on the muscular strength of insects must have intrigued Ernst, for it may have provided him with another motif. A second engraving showed insects in flight (fig. 162). In the foreground a large umbel bent its stem diagonally. In Histoire Naturelle a very similar flower stretches diagonally, covering a great portion of the decorated surface—just as in the engraving. Ernst has kept the general slant of the long stem and the idea of a radiating top but his plant is so stylized that none of the botanical books consulted offer exact sources. The same observation can be made for the rest of the vegetation depicted in Histoire Naturelle. The cactus-like plant is hardly credible, at least in its bottom part (but we must remember that
the lower portion of the fresco, hidden behind a couch, was not meant to be seen). It was perhaps born from the coupling of elements borrowed from the illustration already mentioned (fig. 162) where long flat and, sometimes, folded leaves occupy the space in similar fashion, and from representations of cactus actually found for example in *Atlas des Plantes de France* (fig. 163), a source that Ernst is known to have used in several other instances.45

The artichoke-like plants pose an even more difficult problem. No literal source has yet been found. Because of their shape, size, color, rigidity and rigorous frontality, they seem to be composite creations. The existence of similar plant forms in Ernst's earlier work has already been pointed out (Dada Gauguin). Another 1920 collage merits mention, *Paysage aux feuilles*, where flat but very similar vertical forms are arranged in successive rows (fig. 161).

The strong verticality and the long stem of Ernst's plants in *Histoire Naturelle* could also have been suggested to him by illustrations from *Le Magasin Pittoresque*, where in 1878 a series of articles had been devoted to primitive landscapes, that is, landscapes of previous geological eras (fig. 164-165-166). But such examples do not account for the intriguing red berries attached to the stems in various ways. Here, all kinds of speculations are possible. Ernst could have borrowed the idea from descriptions of fruits such as the one devoted to the pepper-plant published and illustrated in the 1881 volume of *Magasin Pittoresque* (fig. 167). The author of the article wrote: "La graine du poivrier est légèrement charnée à l'état frais; d'abord verdâtre, puis rouge, elle devient noire en séchant ... Les graines du poivre sont réunies au nombre de vingt à trente sur une même grappe" (my underlining). 46 But knowing Ernst's availability to chance encounters, and also the pleasure he took in displacing, transposing or disguising bizarre sources, he may also have reacted to less direct or more diverting images. "Le nègre grimpeur," an illustration from *La Nature* showing a mechanical toy where the climbing figure could be
abstracted into several rounded forms (fig. 168), may have triggered his imaginative mind. 47 "Le mât de cocagne," a drawing after a work by Goya, reproduced in Le Magasin Pittoresque (fig. 169) shows characteristics in common with "Le nègre grimpeur": the same frontality coupled with human bodies in climbing poses, once again readable as rounded hanging forms. Both images could have played a role in Ernst's creation.

Behind the first row of vertical plants and tall post, Histoire Naturelle displays a curious garden. Winding alleys and well trimmed bushes lead the viewer's eye toward the horizon line. Spies has described this space as "a sort of irregular French park with compacted flower beds like those in the Garden Airplane Traps," 48 a reading which he gave repeatedly. 49 Lucy Lippard included a reproduction of Histoire Naturelle in her article "The world of Dada Max Ernst, procreation, germination and nature images" but without seeming to realize how well it fit her subject, for she never discussed the work. 50 However she came close to the truth: The garden of Histoire Naturelle has nothing to do with the open Jardins Gobe-avion. It is, to the contrary, an image of hidden ovulation, of teeming life, and of invisible crawling movements as if Ernst had taken his inspiration from cross-section drawings of ant's hill, such as the examples found in Le Magasin Pittoresque (fig. 170) or La Nature (fig. 171) 51 or, perhaps, from a cross-section of a mole-cast (fig. 172). In order to reconstruct Ernst's visual quotation we must conceal the right half of Histoire Naturelle, where the strong orthogonal of the brick wall interferes with this reading. The absolute verticality of the remaining portion of the garden is then seen in its total clarity and perfect faithfulness to its scientific sources. Ernst's only modifications were to connect the burrows and to add the colors.

Histoire Naturelle is also a hymn to nature. The span of the seasons is shown in all its amplitude. The straggly, leafless yellow trees in the middle ground speak of winter, while the flowering umbel
symbolizes springtime, and the numerous red berries suggest the fruits of summer. Insect and animal life are present, but the human presence is only implied. The long oblique brick wall with its door and window testify to man's intervention as builder. The two contradictory dwellings on the far-off horizon also evoke human life in its most primitive and most sophisticated stages. A small hut in the center of the picture is opposed on the left by an elaborate Mediterranean villa shadowed by Italian cypress and cedar trees. An illustration from *Le Magasin Pittoresque* showing a huge "eucalyptus globulus" -- whose powerful trunk reminds us of Ernst's central post, framed on each side by primitive straw huts -- could very well have inspired the artist (fig. 173). Representations of the Villa Borghese (fig. 175) or of the Casin of Raphael (fig. 174), both in Rome, may be his sources for the house in the far left.

The animal motif -- the mother and her baby -- placed by Ernst atop the wall and door is more difficult to decipher. The group seems to belong once more to a hybrid genre invented by the painter for the purpose of his picture. Head and tail belong to two different species. Given the mouth opening of a great ant-eater (fig. 176), the creature also displays at the same time a curled tail which could be that of a "quincajou" (fig. 177). One wonders if Ernst, as he often did, has not made here a visual verbal pun. An illustration found in *Le Magasin Pittoresque* is in that sense very intriguing. Entitled "Le maki à fraise," it shows an animal whose general aspect comes very close to Ernst's being except for the head which is a little smaller (fig. 178). The word "fraise" refers to the animal's fur collar, whose shape is similar to the "fraise" collar worn in France in Renaissance times. Ernst has taken the word "fraise" (strawberry) in its literal sense by placing a conspicuous red strawberry within the reach of the animal. One "fraise" (the fur collar) has been replaced by another (the berry). The text accompanying the illustration corroborates this hypothesis. The maki is described as an animal always longing for high places. Coincidence or not, it is worth noting that the motif mother/child
placed above a door is found a second time in the Eaubonne cycle. Cantique, one of Cécile's frieze tableaux, formerly stood above the separation door between parents and child's quarters.

Formal sources found by Ernst in his previous works or in his favorite nineteenth century books and magazines are, indeed, important. They should not, though, make us overlook the pervasive influence of Chirico. Walls set in a strong oblique position; apparent brick work; windows understood as mere holes and at the same time translating wall thickness; emphatic verticals; isolated hand or glove motifs; all are features commonly found in Chirico's oeuvre between 1913 and 1919. The oblique wall receding into space, its brick work and the central post of Histoire Naturelle could be Ernst's response to Chirico's Italian perspectives and towers. Artichoke motifs were also used by Chirico in various paintings dated 1913 and 1914 (fig. 155-156); by 1923 they were surely known to Ernst who may have been — consciously or not — influenced by these intriguing images. More striking perhaps are the correspondences between Chirico's 1914 L'énigme de la fatalité (fig. 157), although it is not known if Ernst ever saw it first-hand or reproduced, and Ernst's Au premier mot limpide. The two pictures have in common vertical elements — a tower for Chirico, a plant for Ernst — walls pierced by windows, and similar hand or glove motifs cropped at wrist level and isolated. The format of Chirico's image is triangular rather than rectangular, but his glove has been given a space whose ambiguity equals the one conceived by Ernst for his female hand.

This female hand has itself given rise to numerous commentaries. Sexual or Freudian interpretations are the most common approaches to this picture. More general explanations have also been suggested; they mainly deal with the notions of pressure and metamorphosis. All these themes must be considered. Then Au premier mot limpide should be viewed from a more personal and intimate perspective.
Charlotte Stokes has concentrated her analysis essentially on the formal qualities of the picture. Among its possible meanings she says only: "The crossed legs imply either sexual inhibition or denial of sex to another."\textsuperscript{54} Lucy Lippard goes a little further, asserting that \textit{Au premier mot limpide} belongs to that series of Ernst's works dealing with "the theme of pressure -- physical, or (re-pressive) political and social."\textsuperscript{55} She sees the hand as "trapped between the wall and the tree that stands just behind the wall, leaving an ambiguous space that would barely allow a volume to be inserted,"\textsuperscript{56} and compares the Eaubonne image to that of \textit{La femme chancelante} where the whole female body is squeezed by a machine.

Without knowing its formal source in \textit{La Nature}, Robert Jouanny understood \textit{Au premier mot limpide} as a commentary by Ernst on metamorphosis and transformation, and on the ambiguities of perceived sensations as opposed to formal knowledge and prejudices.\textsuperscript{57} The theme of metamorphosis, according to Jouanny, is also present in Eluard's contemporary poems. Painter and poet alike, he thinks, delighted in handling metamorphosis as a means to express the richness and mobility of an universe always in question. Jouanny's approach is too general and not sufficient to explain all the implications of the picture.

Spies' interpretation of the picture is more specific and develops an entirely different viewpoint than the one suggested by my research. Almost from the beginning Spies understood \textit{Au premier mot limpide} as a visual transposition made by the painter of Freud's essay \textit{Delusion and Dream} in W. Jensen's \textit{Gradiva}. Spies for instance stated: "[Max Ernst] starts out from a text in which he was obviously fascinated by certain motifs,"\textsuperscript{58} and, later in his discussion, he re-emphasized that statement: "Ernst must have been extremely fascinated by Freud's essay to have apparently borrowed the motif for his picture."\textsuperscript{59} Immediately one wonders what the story of \textit{Gradiva} is? What motif contained in it could have so fascinated Ernst?
The theme of Gradiva is taken from a short novel, *Gradiva: ein pompejanisches Phantasiestück*, written in 1903 by Wilhelm Jensen, and from Freud's subsequent analysis of the text published in 1907. Gradiva is the story of a young archeologist, Norbert Harnold, who suffers from a not uncommon mental disturbance -- a repressed love in childhood. Harold is cured only when he allows his instincts to operate, and understands that his obsessive dreams about a beautiful woman depicted in a Roman bas-relief are trying to lead him toward the girl he once loved, but had forgotten. The setting for the story, Pompeii, is important. The young archeologist is there to look for information about the Roman bas-relief portraying a young woman gracefully holding her robes as she walks. He has given her the name Gradiva in his dreams. Eventually this Gradiva and Zoe Bertgang, his real-life love, become one person, since Gradiva is the symbol of this early attachment. But to win Zoe, Norbert must capture for her father, a zoologist, a certain lizard that lives on the island of Capri.

Analyzing the novel, Freud wrote: "The lizard-catching acquires the meaning of husband catching." Later in his essay he added: "The wish to be captured by the beloved, to yield and surrender to her, as it may be construed behind the lizard-catching, has really a passive masochistic character." Starting from there, Spies explained his deciphering of *Au premier mot limpide* as follows:

"Attached to the end of a string, a creature that seems a cross between a lizard and an insect climbs up the wall. It is not hard to interpret this image as a symbol of erotic bondage. But I think there is another particular that may help us to reach a more precise interpretation of the extraordinary scene. What strikes one in both pictures [Spies includes in his analysis *Histoire Naturelle*] is the coloring, which is unusually bright for Max Ernst at that period -- the radiant-blue sky and the contrasting brick-red masonry. This and the motif of the screenlike wall, which does not serve to enclose a space, put one in mind of Pompeii. The same motifs are found in Freud's essay *Delirium* [sic] and Dreams in W. Jensen's *Gradiva*, which made a deep impression on the Surrealists."
Several remarks can immediately be made concerning Spies' interpretation. One of the points he makes seems to be the visual association of the hand motif with the string and the lizard-like animal, which he relates to Freud's analysis. But curiously, he remains silent about the conspicuous red ball. In discussing Ernst's formal sources for this picture, we have seen that the entire image is the result of Ernst's coupling of two balls into one in order to link two totally diverging realities, a procedure that Spies does not even consider. Nevertheless, the Pompeii/Gradiva connection has become so well established that the Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen repeats it in one of its catalogs.

Another point Spies uses in support of his theory is the "unusually bright" coloring of both _Au premier mot limpide_ and _Histoire Naturelle_, which he compares to Ernst's contemporary production. The brightness of the color reminds him of Pompeii. The vividness of the Eaubonne color scheme has already been discussed in relation to the tile floor of the entry hall, and to the different moods willfully conveyed on each story of the building. All these colors are Ernst's own; they are the translation of his moods, not an allusion to Pompeii. Moreover, the large expanses of solid color that Ernst used to cover the walls which he eventually decorated, explain the lack of nuances in his sky backgrounds. As for the difference in color intensity between _Au premier mot limpide_ and Ernst's other works of the period, one has just to look at some of the pictures he undertook in 1923 or 1924. Large expanses of the same strong and warm orange tone can be found in _Ubu Imperator_ (reproduced in color in Edward Quinn, _Max Ernst_, p. 130) or in _Sainte Cécile_ (Ibid., p. 115). Vibrant blue skies also dominate _Long Live Love_ (Ibid., p. 117) or _Two children threatened by a nightingale_ (Ibid., p. 129).

Actually, Spies' reference to Pompeii was made very early on, that is, since the exhibition of the Eaubonne wall paintings at the Galerie André-François Petit in May 1969. Both Günter Metken -- later to
become associated with Spies in the compiling of Ernst catalogue raisonnable -- and Werner Spies wrote reviews on the show in which they compared or linked the wall paintings in Eaubonne to the general idea of Pompeii.67 Both, for instance, used the word "grotesques" to describe Cécile's frieze. Spies repeated this comparison when he raised the theme of Gradiva in 1971: "The 'Pompeian' character of the situation is matched by the structure of the entire decorative scheme which comprises major scenes and grotesques," he wrote.68 Grotesques, according to the traditional definition are "a kind of ornament used in antiquity and consisting of representations of medallions, sphinaxes, foliage and imaginary creatures."69 Essentially ornamental, grotesques are generally repetitive in their motifs and rhythmical in their composition. Spies' comparison with Pompeian grotesques obviously applies to Cécile's frieze. But even given that restriction, it is hard to look at Ernst's motifs for the little girl in such a pejorative way, unless we give the name of "grotesques" to the entire group of Surrealist painting produced between the mid-twenties and the mid-thirties by a group of artists largely influenced by Ernst's visionary discoveries.

The last point to be discussed in connection with Spies' interpretation is the knowledge of Freud's essay. That Ernst was acquainted with this text published in German in 1907 is logical, since he received some formal training in Philosophy at the University of Bonn in 1909 and had "the intention of specializing in psychiatry."70 A small collage from 1920 seems to corroborate this knowledge of Freud's essay (fig. 181). Both its caption and the motifs (there is a humorous reference to "foot fetishism") allude to Gradiva. But Eluard's knowledge of the story is doubtful, since the first French translation of Freud's essay was not published before 1931.71 Why, therefore, impose such a theme on Eluard? And why, if really Ernst intended to convey -- as asserted by Spies -- a Pompeian atmosphere throughout the house, would he have limited it to only two frescoes in Eluard's room? As for the impact of Freud's essay on the Surrealist group, it was, indeed,
immense; however it followed the completion of the Eaubonne decoration by almost ten years. Breton, Dali and Masson, each in their respective field, reacted to the text in the years which followed its publication in France, but Ernst and Eluard, already separated, apparently remained untouched by the Gradiva madness — another indication that this theme had only slight appeal for them.

The interpretation of Au premier mot limpide is not easy and the abundance of literature which surrounds it only adds to the difficulty of the task. At least one important aspect has never been thoroughly explored regarding this picture: the intimate relationship between the three adult members of the Eaubonne household. Lack of information or perhaps respect for privacy have impeded this approach. However, the location of this fresco above the conjugal bed, its connection with its two companion pieces, and the obvious erotic content of the three images should be given some thought.

Oedipus Rex, purchased by Paul Eluard in 1922, must have hung somewhere in the house in Eaubonne. In this picture an ominous male hand partially emerges from a window, holding a slightly opened walnut shell. The walnut and two of the fingers are in turn pierced by metallic implements in the shape of an arrow and a bow-like machine. This image has consistently been seen as symbol of more or less painful sexual relationships. Ancillary meanings also speak of fear of castration or of surrogate vision. Obviously, up to a certain point, most observers have been influenced by the title Ernst gave to his picture. In the case of Au premier mot limpide, no prejudices or "idées reçues" of that sort can interfere with our interpretation, since the title was given much later, and was not Ernst's own (Chapter III, p. 127). But the temptation to see a link between the later work and Oedipus Rex still exists. Diane Waldman has clearly associated the two pictures in a joint analysis. She wrote in her Introduction to the Ernst 1975 retrospective catalogue:
"The most unusual panel in the house is At the First Clear Word. The sexual symbolism reflects Ernst preoccupation with Freudian psychology at the time. The framing device with the hand in this painting, as in Oedipus Rex, implies penetration or seduction. The two works in this respect appear to be symbolic companion pieces: the former representing the female sexuality, the latter male."77

The coupling of these two works does make sense, associated as they were through their common author (Max Ernst), their common owners (Paul and Gala Eluard) and the common space they shared (the house in Eaubonne). But Au premier mot limpide, in addition to its general reference to female sexuality, should also be read as an allusion to Max, Gala and Paul's relationship. The symbolic female hand, which is also more than a simple hand, holds one red ball, which in turn must be understood as more than one ball. Is this an allusion to one woman physically given to/taken by two men? Or a reference to the genitals of only one of the men?78 The string, which links the insect to the red ball, spells rather clearly the letter "M," while the crossed fingers can be read as forming a "X."79 MX for "Max."80 Other elements in the picture also seem to allude to the triangular situation. The two towering plants in a state of erection could symbolize Max and Paul, one -- but which one? -- "inside the wall," and the other "outside the wall," half hidden and isolated, as the green insect is isolated on the huge post in Histoire Naturelle. The shadow cast by the female hand does not really relate to the motif itself. It has the haunting silhouette of a limp phallus. Unavowed fear or reference to reality?

All sorts of similar associations can be explored in Histoire Naturelle where rows of phallic spears towered over both the bed and a terrain in the picture which is propitious to germination. The berries hanging from the artichoke-like plants -- they are staffs if we accept the sources mentioned on p. 169 -- are not devoid of sexual connotation either. One has to climb the staff in order to get the berry. The door, like the window, often carries the meaning of a vagina opening.
The maternal group above the door — as in Cécile's room — seems to emphasize that symbolism. Stick and bottle, male and female attributes, depicted on the third fresco (destroyed) have also a sexual content. The bottle, on its door casing, is hard to reach, but will surrender to the touch of the stick, and so forth.

Some of the meanings elude our investigation. They surely were private references to shared pleasures and complicity between the three friends. In any case, the viewer (voyeur) must refrain from projecting into these pictures his own fantasies, prejudices, or experiences. That desire however was at the core of Gala and Paul's bedroom decoration cannot be denied. Desire was in fact to be at the core of Ernst's oeuvre in general as the painter himself confessed in a much later interview. Asked once if he was aware of the profoundly erotic nature of his art, Ernst — conveniently enough for this study on the Eaubonne cycle — linked in his answer not only Eluard's position on the problem, but Breton's as well:

"I suppose I really paint things that I desire intensely to see before me as objects rather than as dreams or visions in my own mind. To paint a picture, I must desire to see it as intensely as one desires to see before one's eyes a woman whom one loves passionately and whose physical presence one desperately misses. In this respect, my relationship to my own work and to all that it represents is strictly an erotic one. Still, I reject the puritanical and too chaste eroticism of the Surrealist poet André Breton, though we were at one time very close friends and associates. In fact, we finally parted mainly because we could no longer agree on this point. But be all that it may, the objects that one creates never quite come up to one's expectations as transposed desires or dreams. Paul Eluard once said that he had never found what he loved in what he did."

Going further in that direction would mean the opening of a much wider debate on the notion of reality as opposed to its correspondant ideal, and an analysis of the psychic genesis of art, for which there is no room here.
3. Cécile's frieze

The change in tone between Paul and Gala's quarters and their daughter's room has been previously mentioned. Nevertheless, at least one of the tableaux seems to refer again to the trio Max–Paul–Gala. Others are just playful associations of images or rebuses.

A few sources have been discovered which contradict earlier interpretations. But in most panels the high degree of abstraction coupled with the small size of the motifs have proved to be a serious problem. In some instances Ernst's forms are so stylized that identification is difficult. Fortunately, recurrent motifs found in Ernst's earlier works bring a helpful feeling of déjà vu.

The reconstructed sequence of images allows now a global view of Ernst's decoration for the little Cécile. Apparently no real story is being told by the painter, but an overall theme -- the mythical "voyage initiatique" or, perhaps, more simply the voyage of life -- seems to govern the inner logic of the ensemble.

- Il n'y a plus de vraies hydrocyclettes (fig. 182):

Undoubtedly the most striking and successful panel of the frieze, Il n'y a plus de vraies hydrocyclettes depicts a long-beaked duck with a yellow tuft in the act of swimming. Above its back a sort of telescopic shape levitates, linked nevertheless to the animal's neck. In order not to impede the movements of the duck, the telescopic form is completed by two small wheels which should logically follow the animal's impulse. Above this odd coupling floats a blue fan. Except for the slightly indented beak of the duck, the picture is calm, serene and above all entertaining.

More than the other pictures, Il n'y a plus de vraies hydrocyclettes has attracted the attention of Ernst's specialists. Werner
Spyes has carefully looked at this motif, which he describes as the ultimate stage of metamorphosis of a theme recurrent in Ernst's earlier work, that of the animal coupled with the representation of a gun. Listing two previous collages (fig. 184-185) and their source (fig. 183), he concludes:

"La nouvelle symbiose ainsi réalisée — association de l'animal et de la machine — est reprise dans le cycle pictural réalisé en 1923 pour la maison de Paul Eluard à Eaubonne. L'un des tableaux les plus frappants des dessus de portes est Il n'y a plus de vraies hydrocyclettes. Le tableau initial Le fantassin à la nage [an illustration from La Nature for which Spy es does not indicate his references; see fig. 183] a été si modifié que le prétexte fonctionnel disparaît complètement."

Spyes admits the difficulty he had in relating his source to the Eaubonne picture. His scruples are understandable, for in fact those two motifs have little or nothing in common. Ernst's procedure in that case was very simple. His panel is but the humorous illustration of a verbal pun that he, once again, found in his favorite source magazines.

Ernst has borrowed the duck motif from an article devoted to a certain variety of ducks, namely "Le canard mandarin," that he found in Le Magasin Pittoresque. A fairly large illustration showed a male specimen, his female and their duckling (fig. 186). Obviously, the caption more than the illustration appealed to Ernst. It reads: "Le Canard mandarin, Canard à éventail, ou Sarcelle de Chine" (my underlining). The text described the animal as "un très bel oiseau" with a tuft hanging behind and with "deux éventails étalés et relevés" on its back. Taking the caption and the text word for word, in a charming rebus Ernst has given the crested duck in profile view a real fan viewed in both open and closed positions. The animal has lost its natural appendix, but gained an equivalent attribute. Ernst's source for the fan may have been either La Nature (fig. 187) or Le Magasin Pittoresque (fig. 188), although the illustration in Le Magasin Pit-
toresque comes closer to the rendering on the panel, due to the general orientation of the closed fan. The chiseled handle of the fan may have generated another association, this time visual. Ernst has added to the closed fan motif two bizarre lateral excrescences in the form of two small wheels, whose source could very well be a pastry cutter! Both the fan handle and the pastry cutter (fig. 189) have in common an elaborate chased decoration. We may also assume that images such as the one describing "Le nouvel appareil de natation de M. H. Richardson" (fig. 190) could have been the catalyst for the transformation achieved by Ernst.

A composite image, Il n'y a plus de vraies hydrocyclottes is one of the most poetic and deliberately naive pictures of the frieze. Ernst had unified his sources by giving them both a common scale and a cool range of colors. Green and blue dominate, enhanced by golden yellow and slight touches of red on the animal's back and neck.

- Cantique (fig. 191):

The liquid realm of river or sea given to "Le canard-éventail," suddenly becomes solid ground in this painting. Oddly, Cantique is the only picture in the entire cycle where the horizon line is given such a dramatic treatment. A strong oblique cuts the picture into two zones: the adult world, dark and earthly-bound, and the child's world where everything is possible, even flying.

Cantique belongs to that group of pictures in which the motifs are so stylized that search for sources proves to be difficult. Nevertheless, two possible images found in Le Magasin Pittoresque could have triggered Ernst's imagination. They both represent a woman in unusual attire. One is a drawing of oriental costume from the Louvre collections (fig. 192); the overall lines of the folds and the strange coif recalls the woman in Ernst's own painting. The other, a drawing after Zampini, depicts an eighteenth century Venitian scene (fig. 193). The
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ADMINISTRATEUR DÉLÉgué

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M DCCLXXVIII

16. Le Magasin Pittoresque, 1890
sample of title page, (reduced format)
general shape of the woman's dress and cape, and the opposition set by
a strong oblique line between water and stairs are reminiscent of
Ernst's own division of the space and treatment of the woman. Perhaps
the painter borrowed from both sources to compose his split image in
which the female figure hides her arms underneath a sort of cape
instead of logically reaching toward the flying infant. It should be
noted that in Freudian symbolism, flying has a strong sexual connota-
tion. The position of the panel above the separation door alludes
perhaps to such a symbolism.

- Rien n'est incompréhensible (fig. 194):

Using an architectural motif, Ernst smoothly reestablishes a
flat plane as the horizon line. Framed on the left side by a stylized
group of houses and on the right side by a twig on which a tiny bird is
perched, an odd animal crawls, jumps or levitates — who knows? Obvi-
ously a "collage," Ernst's hybrid creation at once calls to mind a
monkey (rear and tail), a frog (head and front part of the body) and a
snail (horns). As is typical with Ernst's displacements, the scale is
not consistent and colors contradict shapes. The monkey part has been
given the green tone of the frog, and vice versa. The unknown creature
is also equipped with a pinkish funnel towards which points a pink
shape whose phallic overtones are unmistakable. By its balance and its
humor, by the wink of its black eye, this strange assemblage reminds us
of the whimsical Rossignol Chinois.

Many possible sources could be mentioned regarding Rien n'est
incompréhensible. La Nature and Le Magasin Pittoresque are full of
illustrations displaying different types of monkeys and frogs. Which
one — if he used one — did Ernst choose? It is difficult to say for
certain. Two of those illustrations are given here as examples (fig.
195-196). The architectural motif, too, is so abstracted that several
illustrations can be suggested. For instance, two important details in
Ernst's picture, the overhanging right edge of the building and the
strong oblique in the left corner, are features also found in two illustrations from Le Magasin Pittoresque (fig.197-198). But can we really claim that they were a starting point for Ernst?

- Les labyrinthes ne sont pas faits pour les chiens (fig. 199):

Following the intriguing monkey-frog is an ambiguous scene involving human beings. A woman, facing a blind wall, is enclosed in a box-like house. This is Gala. Both the hair style and the dress with its tiny ruffle at the waist resemble several contemporary pictures of Eluard's wife. Behind the wall, but with no possible communication with the woman, a frisky horse paws the ground. In the distance, a cavalier rides away. "Symbolisme élémentaire d'une femme qui parait se refuser à deux hommes dont l'un piaffe et l'autre s'écarte," writes J.C. Gateau. The symbolism of the situation is accentuated even more when one realizes that the frisky horse attitude is totally unnatural. No horse has ever raised its left leg in the pose depicted by Ernst.

A work contemporary with Les Labyrinthes presents some similarities with this image. Entitled Inspeizierung eines Pferdes (fig. 200) and dated ca. 1923 by Werner Spies, it shows a horse -- this time frothing at the mouth -- who has successfully passed through the door/wall. On the left of the latter, big boxes are piled up, and two women and a mannequin are standing on a sort of platform which recalls the raised architectural element also found on the left side of Les Labyrinthes. Could these two pictures be related? One is tempted to interpret them as two sides of the same coin: frustration, then fulfillment of the same erotic desire. Or perhaps fulfillment comes first, and frustration follows.

Le Magasin Pittoresque, a source for other Escholone elements, contains an eighteenth century vignette which is striking in its resemblance to this fragment of Cécile's frieze. It portrays a cavalier and a woman with outstretched arms, whose posture is very close to that of
Gala (fig. 201). More than a close similarity in the formal compositions of the works what strikes us in both images is the pervasive atmosphere of non-communication.

The ruin-like structure on the left side of *Les Labyrinthes* presents the same type of abstraction as the group of houses in *Rien n'est incompréhensible*. Ernst may have looked at an illustration such as the ruins of Eglise Saint-Etienne, in Lille (fig. 202). A similar curvature of the arches, and the same juxtaposition of masses are found both in Ernst's picture and in the illustration. Chirico's influence is also present in the strong oblique and vertical lines used by Ernst in his motif.

- *Conseils d'ami*: (fig. 203)

This strange, humorous panel seemingly defies all rules of scale. A huge foot resting on what could be a thick sole is set in the neighborhood of a tiny boat. Despite its sails the tiny boat cannot move since it rests on the ground. But perhaps it will roll on what seems to be a wheel. An immense flower grows in the middle of nowhere. Completing the picture an object difficult to identify twists and turns on the ground. Colors are subdued; the sandy ground speaks of far-off desert. A range of bluish mountains stands on the horizon.

After a while, it appears that the picture could very well be a sort of rebus. It shares with *Il n'y a plus de vraies hydrocyclettes* what seems to be at first glance an absurd juxtaposition of alien elements. As in the latter, the sources Ernst consulted give us partial answers.

Ernst probably borrowed the giant foot motif from a very striking illustration published in *Le Magasin Pittoresque* and entitled "Le pied di Marmo, à Rome" (fig. 204). Depicting a fragment of ancient sculpture, it recalls by its congruity the colossal statue of Constantine,
also in Rome and also broken into pieces. As he often did, Ernst has read the matching text. The author of the article gave the following description:

"Ce pied, par sa nudité de haut style, encadré d'un semelle et de ses attaches, bandelettes ou courroies, conserve un certain caractère de noblesse et d'élegance [...] On distinguait assez vaguement, sous l'usure des détails, que le système de chaussure y tient le milieu entre celle des sandales, discalceata ou pedibus intectis, et le brodequin, appelé chez les Grecs 'cothurne du voyageur.'"\(^{36}\)

The last three words, making reference to the ancient "cothurnus of the traveller" and associated with the odd image of this giant foot, were the trigger of a whole series of associations — as previously the caption "le canard éventail." The huge foot really needed "a cothurne du voyageur" to fit the definition. Ernst has erased all signs of the ancient sandal and equipped the foot with the attribute of the ancient traveller: a boat. But this is not just any boat, it is a boat whose strangeness equals that of the giant foot. In La Nature he found what he was looking for: a boat with wheels, actually a rescue boat, easily lowered by a system of wheels (fig. 205).\(^{37}\) In his image Ernst has somewhat abstracted the primary motif, but the shape of the sails and above all the idea of the wheel are easily recognizable, as is recognizable the blue flower, a gentian. A likely source for this motif is plate n° 188 of Désiré Bois' *Atlas des plantes de France* (fig. 206). Ernst's flower is identical in shape and colors to the nineteenth-century colored engraving. Even the stippling of the inner petals has been copied down to the most minute details.

Finding a source for the strange form curling under the flower is much more difficult. First of all, what is it? It seems to be a twisting rug of some sort. But even this identification poses a problem, for who has ever seen a rug capable of such a strange movement? Finally, the only one of dozens of illustrations considered which presented sufficient analogy with Ernst's abstracted form is, curiously
enough, a photograph of a ray-fish in motion (fig. 207). Could it be
the starting point for Ernst's motif? We can only speculate.

- Autant rêver d'ouvrir les portes de la mer (fig. 208):

The following tableau in Ernst's frieze is the longest, but also
-- excepting the tenth panel -- the sparsest. Two houses, one on each
side of the picture and one smaller than the other, shelter a pair of
inverted fishes and two mannequin-like forms floating in the air.
Almost identical in shape and design, the two houses seem filled with
the same darkness. There is no possible communication between the two
buildings, separated by a desolate space over which hangs a sort of
flying cannon. The catastrophic atmosphere is reinforced by the pres-
ence in the distance of an erupting volcano. Could this be an image of
war? The smoke which smoulders at the mouth of the cannon speaks of
open hostilities, as does the isolation on each side of the picture of
the floating dummies and inverted fishes.

Here again, sources were difficult to identify. The idea of inter-
ior spaces filled with darkness could have been suggested to Ernst by
many different images, ranging from cross-sections of buildings (fig.
209), to technical illustrations (fig. 210).

The motif of inverted fishes is very old. It is the traditional
representation of Pisces from the Zodiac, swimming in opposite direc-
tions (fig. 211). With this realization, we also become aware that the
motif of the coupled men has zodiacal equivalent: the Gemini sign.
Instead of symbolic warfare, could Ernst have represented an astro-
logical riddle? The detective work involved in seeking out the herme-
etic significance of this panel is not totally rewarding, for normally
the representation of Gemini is that of a harmonious pair. On Ernst's
picture, the two human symbols are back to back, as if they were
estranged. Moreover, these two zodiacal representations cannot apply
to Ernst, himself an Aries (he was born on April 2, 1891) nor to
Eluard, born on the 14th of December, 1895, hence a Capricorn.

- Réveil officiel du serin (fig. 212):

In its odd organization this picture resembles Conseils d'ami.
Heterogeneous motifs have been brought together without respect for
scale or logic. On what appears to be an Egyptian-like flat boat with
a bird's head prow, have been gathered a strange fish and an incredible
assemblage made up of a huge ear, a nose, and a small saxophone. The
fish is rowing not swimming — an unusual role for this aquatic crea-
ture. A flower rises from the water and turns into a bird. Another
bird — or is it a fish? — flies in the distance. Every detail in
the picture leads to perplexing, conflicting readings. Species in
mutation? Nightmarish hybrids?

These Ernstian visions have several possible sources. Some of the
elements belong to the artist's own stock of images. In Vogel, Fish-
Schlange, a small painting dated 1921 by Werner Spies (fig. 214), are
found a boat coupled with a serpentine form with bird's head, a flying
fish, and a central motif which — although different in its subject —
recalls the impossible grouping (ear-nose-saxophone) of Réveil officiel
du serin.

In looking at old issues of his favorite magazines, Ernst could
also have seen an intriguing Egyptian artifact, a spoon for perfumes,
whose general outline is very close to that of the boat he actually
depicted in his panel (fig. 213). The text, too, may have supplied him
with other associations. It reads:

"Le manche de ces cuillers offre souvent des motifs d'un
invention charmante. Les plus simples sont ornés seulement
de boutons et de fleurs de lotus [...] Une autre cuiller
nous montre une musicienne entre des tiges de papyrus;
ailleurs, c'est une svelte adolescente dans l'attitude de la
nage; l'artiste l'a représentée au moment oû elle vient
d'achever sa brasse; étendue sur la nappe liquide, elle
s'éffile pour mieux fendre l'eau.\textsuperscript{88}

Ernst seems to have gathered in a single image four of the motifs
mentioned in the article or shown in the illustration: the bud of the
flower, the musical instrument, the elongated floating form with a
bird's head, and the ear-like shapes belonging to the spoon motif which
Ernst has instead given to his strange fish. The flower bud itself
closely resembles that of a crocus (fig. 215). The rowing fish can
be compared to an illustration from \textit{Le Magasin Pittoresque} showing
specimens of \textit{péric potràmes}, commonly called "poissons terrestres" (fig.
216). Like Ernst's fish they have the ability to live outside the
water world; in addition, they have the same physical characteristics
(curved tails and bulky bodies).

The coupling of the ear-nose-saxophone has a strong Boschian
accent. Bosch was among Ernst's "favorite painters of the past.\textsuperscript{89}"
Why not credit him with being the source of Ernst's strange motif? A
detail from Bosch's famous \textit{Jardín de las Delicias}, now in Spain, could
be a clue: a huge pair of ears is associated with a knife blade in the
neighborhood of a fairly large wind instrument (fig. 217). These three
elements seem to have been brought closer together by Ernst to form a
single entity. The blade has been changed to a fleshy pointed form
that one tends to read as a nose, and the wind instrument now looks
more like a saxophone than like Bosch's original bag pipe. But the
feeling of nightmarish oddity is the same in both pictures.

- \textit{Fin de circonstances} (fig. 218):

After all the composite images which precede it, the single
flowered motif of this panel seems almost a relief, but this first
impression does not remain. It soon appears that Ernst has assembled,
in one unified representation, elements borrowed from several sources.
Resembling a sea-anemone, Ernst's flower is in fact a cross between water-lily (fig. 219) and nigella (fig. 220). Ernst has kept the general design of the bud of the traditional water-lily; he has also adopted the red and gold colors of Désiré Bois' plate (left corner, on fig. 221), to which he has added the blue twisting pistils of the nigella.

- *Les oiseaux ne peuvent disparaître* (fig. 222):

  A floral motif is also found in this panel. At first glance, it looks similar to that of *Fin de circonstances*. But the similarities are in fact limited to the color range. When looked at carefully subtle differences appear. Instead of having tapered ends, the petals seem truncated. They also twist slightly and, oddly enough, do not relate to a central heart. Resting flush with the water surface, they live a life of their own. Right in the center of this strange flower, Ernst has added a red and blue motif which seems to be reversed with respect to what should be its direction.

  A bird swims towards the flower in a good Ernstian tradition. Werner Spies has described this panel as one of the facets of a more general theme, that of the quest for the Golden Fleece, which he sees as linking three works in Ernst's oeuvre of the early twenties. According to Spies, not only *Les oiseaux ne peuvent disparaître*, but also *Le Fugitif*, a collage from *Les Malheurs des Immortels* (fig. 223), and a 1922 painting *Castor et Pollution* (fig. 224) pertain to that central theme. He explained:

"On peut également relever une concordance entre le dernier collage des Malheurs des Immortels [Le fugitif] et un autre dessus-de-porte du cycle pour Éluard, *Les oiseaux ne peuvent disparaître* [...]. Au premier plan du collage [Le fugitif], un poulpe. Et à partir de l'espèce octopode, un "bateau de papier" ou Argonautes argo, le jeu peut commencer ... Argo était le nom du navire su lequel les Argonautes partirent pour la Colchide conquérir la Toison d'Or [...]."

That Ernst in the early 1920's was interested in the theme of voyage, of departure -- after all he had fled his country and abandoned his family -- is made clear by some elements of Cécile's frieze. *Il n'y a plus de vraies hydrocycleottes, Conseils d'ami and Réveil officiel du Serin* deal more or less directly with this idea. Although intriguing, the theme of the Golden Fleece brought forth by Werner Spies is not fully satisfactory as an explanation of *Les Oiseaux ne peuvent disparaître*. Our main objection is that Spies analyzed this image as if it were an isolated picture. His text, written in 1974 and repeated in 1982 and again in 1984 with just a few words changed,*91 does not deal with the fact that the work could be more closely related to the other paintings in the room to which they all once belonged than to a general external theme. The reconstruction of Cécile's frieze allows such an understanding now.

The reading given by Spies of *Castor et Pollution* raises another kind of objection. More than a reference to the search for the Golden Fleece, this picture is a direct allusion to Max and Paul's relationship. The scabrous overtone of the title, as well as the verbal pun involved, implies a complicity between the two friends which was not only artistic or mythological. The composition of the picture calls to mind earlier sources, the small *Vogel-Fisch-Schlange* already mentioned, and another 1921 work, untitled but often called *Les hommes ne le sauront jamais*. Both of them made use of coupled figures -- in these two cases birds -- set back to back in or close to a boat motif. The sources for *Castor et Pollution* have been found. Ernst combined three
illustrations from *La Nature*: a description of various methods for whistling using the fingers (fig. 225), a cross-section of a submarine (fig. 226), and part of windmill (fig. 227). The manner in which this picture was constructed clearly demonstrates Ernst's method of working. From the beginning of his Parisian period, the painter had been systematically looking for inspiration in magazines and books from the previous century. This was my own method in searching for the sources of the Eaubonne murals.

Unfortunately, the search has not always been rewarding. The bird's head, for instance, in *Les oiseaux ne peuvent disparaitre* could not be clearly identified. Once more, the motif is composite; the crest has obviously been grafted on and the claws belong to another animal, perhaps to an ant (fig. 222). Very early in his career, Ernst used bird's head motifs. The best known of these images in the early twenties is the trapped bird of *Oedipus Rex*. The same idea is present in *Les oiseaux ne peuvent disparaitre*. Once again, Ernst's bird is put in a very uncomfortable situation. Its wings have become useless, and its desperate claws grasp only at water.

- Untitled panel ("The House" motif) (fig. 94):

Water also covers the entire background of this picture. The central house motif and the lateral sentry-boxes seem to be squeezed into a space as thin as a sheet of paper. No window or door animates the flat facade, but we must remember that this was in large part hidden behind the top of a rounded mirror. In this respect Ernst's motif seems inappropriate. Why paint such a large motif if it had to be partially concealed? A smaller motif designed to animate the surface left visible would have been perhaps a better idea, unless Ernst understood his little house as a vital motif.

Looking at Hubert's pictures (fig. 95-96) one suddenly realizes that the watery background was not meant to be seen. The top of the
mirror did cover all that area, thus modifying the relationship of the viewer to the picture. Having lost all reference to the horizon and to the watery environment, Ernst's house did not look as awkward as it looks now on Guyomard's panel. It was clearly a house, a reassuring house well situated in the space between its two framing elements; a house whose meaning was reinforced by its position above the fireplace for, in French, the word "foyer" can apply both to a home and to a fireplace. Such an association of words would have been understood by Ernst and perhaps, was used by him.

Now that the cycle is reconstructed, the house motif seems to be the key to the entire frieze. Both the starting point and the finishing line, it is the point from where everyone leaves to discover the world, and the place where everyone longs to return to after a life of wanderings. The general direction of the frieze and the way the images follow each other reinforce this reading. There is an underlying clockwise order starting from the house: Il n'y a plus de vraies hydrocyclettes, Cantique, Rien n'est incompréhensible, Les labyrinthes ne sont pas faits pour les chiens and Les oiseaux ne peuvent disparaître all point towards the right side, leading our eye easily from one picture to the next. Two panels (Conseils d'ami and Réveil officiel du serin) reverse this rhythm, but they are framed on their left either by an impassable boundary (the strong yellow band of Conseils d'ami) or a "stop" image (Autant rêver d'ouvrir les portes de la mer), which somewhat discourages our eye from looking back.

Could Ernst's tableaux for Cécile be the stages of a modern "voyage initiatique"? Is Ernst describing for the little girl the difficult road to maturity? The three panels on the north wall would then, in a logical sequence, evoke the high expectations of childhood, the physical and mental mutations of adolescence, the frustrations and complexity of an adult world. The meaning of the three panels on the east wall is more obscure: travels (Conseils d'ami), war and/or psychological insecurity/disturbance (Autant rêver d'ouvrir les portes de la
mer), could be implied. But what interpretation should we give to Réveil officiel du Serin? Travel again or, perhaps, pleasures of the senses? The golden open flower of Fin de circonstances could then be understood as a synonym of both knowledge and maturity. Although, begun with humor (Il n'y a plus de vraies hydrocyclettes), the voyage of life does not end on a reassuring note. Les oiseaux ne peuvent disparaître is a disquieting image, symbol perhaps of old age, with its lost illusions and unfulfilled dreams.
Chapter IV
NOTES

1. John Russel, Max Ernst, Life and Work, pp. 187-188.

2. Spies, Les collages: inventaire et contradiction. For Ernst’s sources, see pp. 415-416.


4. La Nature was an illustrated weekly magazine subtitled: "Revue des Sciences et de leurs applications aux Arts et à l'Industrie," which was also offered in bound books for the preceding years. Publication started in 1873 and lasted until 1942. Until the mid-1890’s, most illustrations in La Nature were wood engravings; they were progressively replaced by photographs. Popular topics included descriptions of new inventions, diagrams of machinery, scientific principles demonstrated with common objects, and magic tricks.

Le Magasin Pittoresque, which started publication in 1833, was more oriented towards ethnographical, zoological and botanical subjects. Reproductions of works of art, as well as accounts of exotic travels appealed to "cultured" readers. Wood engravings were also largely used as illustrations up to the turn of the century. Past that date photographs became the main source for illustrations. Publication ended in 1938.

5. Poley has demonstrated that several plates from this book were used by Ernst as sources for his 1923 Sainte Cécile and 1924 Ubu


8. Uwe Schneede, referring to a statement made by Max Ernst after the recovery of the paintings, wrote: "In contrast to the decorative paintings in Baroque palaces, there is, according to Max Ernst's own statements, no consistent overall plan" (Max Ernst, p. 64). Schneede's assertion is not footnoted. One wonders if Schneede has talked to Ernst about that particular point. More likely Schneede read Werner Spies' 1969 article about the rediscovery of the Eaubonne paintings ("Gärten der Lust. Die Wiederentdeckung eines Bilderzyklus von Max Ernst," Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 30 Juni 1969, p. 22). Spies had written:

"Max Ernst vermeint, das der Zyklus einem festen Programm folgt. Er habe diese Arbeiten aus reinem Vergnügen gemalt" (Max Ernst denies that the cycle follows any definite program. He says he painted these works for the fun of it).

A few lines later, Spies -- without knowing the entire cycle and its inner organization -- astutely noted:

"Alber selbst wenn das Thema sich einer Interpretation entzieht, bleibt doch die Zusammenstellung der einzelnen Motive und Formate, die verraten, das Max Ernst die Verteilung der Arbeiten nicht dem Zufall überlassen hatte" (But even if the theme is not amenable to interpretation, there is still a grouping of individual motifs and formats which reveals that Max Ernst did not leave the distribution of the works up to chance).
9. Ernst was to play again that alternation of green and brown on each side of a corner line in the background of La Vierge corrigée l'enfant Jésus painted in 1926. The corner this time is purely illusionistic and there is no bisected figure involved; but the association of form (two intersecting walls) and colors (green on the facing panel, brown on the perpendicular one) is identical.


12. Coincidence or not, it is worth nothing that when, on a Paris street in 1929, Eluard met Nush, the young woman who was to become his second wife, she was performing as an acrobat:


As for Max Ernst, there is evidence in his early work of a certain interest in dance and dancers. At least six works from 1913 deal with this theme.


15. Describing a photograph of one of the numbers published at the time in Paris Music Hall, Etienne-Alain Hubert writes:

"Une illustration montre un moment du tableau: selon trois niveaux s'étageant depuis les cintres du music-
hall, les girls effectuant des mouvements de danse sont suspendues, chacune par un pied à cinq sangles blanches. D'où l'impression pour le spectateur du parterre d'un inversion du haut et du bas dont le caractère vertigineux devait être accentué par l'oscillation des sangles. Numéro assez saisissant pour qu'il ait inspiré à Max Ernst une fresque disposée bien sur au plafond dans la villa d'Eaubonne où il habita avec les Eluard" ("Eluard, La femme de pierre et les filles de chair. Sur deux poèmes de 'Capitale de la Douleur,'" Champs des Activités Surréalistes, n° 20, septembre 1984, p. 71).

16. Entitled "Merveilles vous dansez sur les sources du ciel," the poem was first published in Nouvelle Revue Française in October 1925, then included in Capitale de la Douleur issued in 1926. The title of the poem was later given to the ceiling motif (see Chapter III, pp. 125-126).

17. Painted in 1923 and exhibited in the Salon des Indépendants in 1924, La Belle Jardinière was included in the group of paintings sold by Ernst to Mutter Ey before he left for Indochina in the summer of 1924. It was acquired in 1929 or 1930 by the Stadlische Museum of Dusseldorf. In 1937, the picture was seized by the Nazis and included in a traveling exhibition called "Entartete Kunst" (or degenerate Art). Its track has been lost since 1939. (For further details, see Max Ernst, Inside the sight, Houston, Institute for the Arts, Rice University, 1973, p. 124.)

18. Waldman, Max Ernst, a retrospective, pp. 32-33.

19. Analyzing Un homme peut en cacher un autre, Werner Spies described it as a formal source for La Belle Jardinière. He also insisted on the ambiguity of the picture brought forth by the superposition of male and female figures; he wrote:

"Un véritable cliché (représentation d'un attitude chorégraphique) est, de toute évidence, utilisé cinq fois ici. Les décalages sont à l'origine de cette impres-
sion, mais on découvre en réalité des différences frappantes. La figure (féminine) qui apparaît, fragmentaire, à gauche recouvre parfaitement celle qui se trouve à droite à l'extérieur. Toutes deux sont décalées parallèlement l'une à l'autre. Les deux figures centrales (masculines) sont également identiques au point de pouvoir se recouvrir. Si nous partons de l'idée que les deux figures centrales redessinent le modèle dans son ensemble, nous pouvons conclure que les deux figures féminines à droite et à gauche ont été réalisées en partie d'après le modèle, en partie librement. La cinquième jambe (gauche) au centre (la seule orientée vers la droite) fut visiblement dessinée d'après une inversion latérale du modèle. Ce dessin fait partie des travaux préparant La Belle Jardinière" (Max Ernst: Les collages, pp. 119-120).


22. Xavière Gauthier explained her reading as follows:

"Un tableau, notamment, peint en 1923 et intitulé Le couple, représente deux personnes, dont il est difficile de dire qui est l'homme et qui est la femme. Celle qui a un visage d'homme a aussi un col "claudine," trois seins, deux petites jambes minces, et celle qui a une taille cambrée de femme a aussi un pantalon d'homme. Le mélange, la confusion, tant souhaitée par Eluard, est ici réalisée sur un mode parodique mais l'important est que cette transformation commune est une "féminisation" au sens le plus traditionnel du terme. En effet, les deux personnages sont presque entièrement faits de dentelles, de rideaux ajourés, de pompons et de franges de tapis ou de store" (Surréalisme et sexualité, Paris, Gallimard, 1971, pp. 90-91.)
23. Whitney Chadwick wrote:

"Ernst's The couple of 1924 also refers to this myth [the androgyne], with the position of the figures indicating the sexual joining of the male and female figures as the source for their metaphysical transformation into one being" ("Eros or Thanatos, The Surrealist cult of love reexamined," Art Forum, vol. 14, November 1975, pp. 46-56.)

24. Two long studies have been devoted to Les hommes n'en sauront rien, but neither one does relate the picture to an image of the androgyne. Geoffrey Hinton ("Max Ernst: Les hommes n'en sauront rien," Burlington Magazine, vol. 117, May 1975, pp. 292-297) saw this picture principally as a translation of the traditional alchemist symbol of coincidentia oppositorum, that is, analogy of the contraries or Harmony. Fred Gettings (The Hidden Art, A study in occult symbolism, London, Studio Vista, 1978, pp. 147-160) understood the image as a "meditation on the nature of man's relationship to cosmos." Curiously though, Gettings made a striking discovery about Les hommes n'en sauront rien, which unfortunately he did not carry on to its raison d'être. He demonstrated that if half of the picture is cancelled out with a straight edge running exactly down the center of the picture (fig. 130) "the four-legged monstruosity pinned down in a kind of nightmare [...] at the same time suggests the feminine receptive position for the sexual act." Gettings' discovery makes clear Ernst's poem.


26. Ibid., p. 50.


29. Ibid., p. 30.


31. In the article published in the special issue of View (2d series, April 1942, p. 30), Ernst said that his favorite occupation as a child was "looking." He later explained how this pleasure of "looking" evolved during his adolescent years:


Making reference to a later period of his personal development, Ernst also wrote:

"Nageur aveugle, je me suis fait voyant. J'ai vu. Et je me suis surpris amoureux de ce que je voyais, voulant m'identifier avec lui" ("Au delà de la peinture," in Ecritures, p. 245).

32. John Russel, Max Ernst, Life and Work, p. 72.

33. In the snapshot showing Gala and Max in the séjour (p. 85), we see a painting by Chirico on the wall.
34. In his preface to La femme 100 têtes, André Breton wrote about Ernst's power to displace things, particularly hands:

"La surréalité sera d'ailleurs fonction de notre volonté de dépaysement complet de tout (et il est bien entendu qu'on peut aller jusqu'à dépayer une main en l'isolant d'un bras, que cette main y gagne en tant que main, et aussi qu'en parlant de dépaysement nous ne pensons pas seulement à la possibilité d'agir dans l'espace)."

This statement, written in 1929, could very well have applied to the Eaubonne door painted six years before.

35. Unfortunately, the other hand signs depicted by Ernst in Au rendez-vous des amis cannot be deciphered under that French alphabet. It would be useful to know if late nineteenth-century manual alphabets for deaf and dumb were the same in Germany and in France.


37. Ibid.


39. This mural painting has never been shown in Europe or in this country since the last major Ernst retrospective in 1975. It was acquired by the Shah of Iran in 1977 (André-François Petit, interview, October 24, 1984), and eventually exhibited in Teheran when the new Museum of Modern Art opened in October 1977 (Conversation with M. Diba, former Director of the Museum, November 13, 1984).

Since the fall of the Iranian monarchy and the establishment of the new artistic rules by the Ayatoollahs, nothing is known of the fate of Histoire Naturelle. All attempts at correspondence with
the Iranian authorities and diplomatic agencies in Paris and Teheran have been in vain.


41. The workers hired by the Moraines to hang their wallpaper reacted in a ribald fashion to Ernst's picture: they added a few lines to mark the female waist and covered the pubis with curly scribbles. The graffiti (fig. 152) was discovered in 1967 by Valette and Guyomard who, of course, decided to erase it (Interviews, October 27 and November 13, 1984).


43. This article actually was a pre-publication from a book by A. E. Brehm, Merveilles de la Nature, les Insectes, about to be published in Paris in 1881. Could Max Ernst have used the book instead of the article from La Nature?


45. See John Russel, Max Ernst, Life and Work, p. 188.

47. This association of abstracted rounded forms with actual round ones is facilitated by the presence in the toy of a hanging sphere symbolizing a fruit. The sphere itself as engraved by Poyet, appears very similar to the two spheres already included in Au premier mot limpide.


51. Incontestably such an image appealed to Ernst. He reused this very same illustration from La Nature in one of the plates of La femme 100 têtes (n° 62).

52. Max Ernst himself has described the making of a "verbal collage" in Beyond Painting (p. 16):

"What is a Phallustrate? It is an alchemic product, composed of the following elements: the autostrade, the balustrade and a certain quantity of Phallus."

Phallustrade was also the title of one of his Cologne collages exhibited in Paris in May 1921.

53. "Lorsqu'ils sont en captivité, on les (les makis) voit s'élancer le long des meubles d'une fenêtre à l'autre, et ils choisissent pour dormir le haut d'une armoire, d'un buffet; ils cherchent ou semblent toujours chercher une demeure élevée" ("Les Lémuriens. Le maki à fraise ou le vari," Le Magasin Pittoresque, 1836, p. 33).


56. Ibid.

57. In an article devoted to Ernst and Eluard's friendship, Robert Jouanny wrote:

"Il suffit que le regard veuille bien cesser de s'asser-
vir aux pré-visions que lui impose l'esprit [...] Le
regard, mais aussi les autres sens, d'où, assurément,
le panneau d'Eaubonne représentant sur fond de ciel uni-
forme, un mur nu, de part et d'autre duquel se dressent,
identiques, deux plantes rigides de caractère exotique
(le réel est le même des deux côtés du mur?); le mur est
percé de deux ouvertures et par l'une d'elles sort une
main, thème fréquent à cette époque, le majeur passant
sur l'index; entre les deux doigts, une petite boule
rouge. Le phénomène d'illusion sensorielle est bien
connu: nous aurons la sensation qu'il y a deux boules.
Une boule, deux boules? Etrange réalité qui, sans
changer, se métamorphose, la boule vue unique d'un
côté du mur étant ressentie double de l'autre côté"
("L'amitié magique de Paul Eluard et Max Ernst," in
Motifs et Figures, Centre d'Art, Esthétique et Littér-
167).

58. Spies, Max Ernst 1950-1970, The return of La Belle Jardin-
rière, p. 48.

59. Ibid., p. 53.

60. Here is the description of the beautiful Gradiva, as told by W. Jensen:

"With her head bent forward a little she held slightly
raised in her left hand, so that her sandalled feet
became visible, her garment which fell in exceedingly
voluminous folds from her throat to her ankles. The
left foot had advanced, and the right, about to follow,
touched the ground only lightly with the tips of the
toes, while the sole and heel were raised almost vertically" (Gradiva, A Pompeian Fancy, as translated by Helen M. Downey, New York, Moffat, Yaid & Co., 1918, p. 4 -- Also reproduced in Sigmund Freud: Delusion and Dream, New York, New Republic, 1927, p. 4).

The motif of the foot or allusions to it recur throughout the novel. Norbert Harnold's fantasies obviously had more to do with that type of image, than with hand/lizard motif.

61. At the end of the novel, Zoe says to Norbert:

"You go over to Capri, for a couple of days; there, with a grass snare -- you can practice making them on my little finger -- catch a lizard Paraglioneusis. Let it go here again, and catch it before his eyes. Then give him free choice between it and me..." (Ibid., p. 123).

62. Ibid., p. 229.

63. Ibid., p. 256.


65. Spies reused -- in a slightly modified version -- his discussion of Au premier mot limpide formerly included in Max Ernst 1950-1970, The return of La Belle Jardinière (pp. 48-54). Translated into French in 1982, it became part of the article "Une poétique du collage" included in the catalogue of the exhibition Eluard et ses amis peintres (Centre Georges Pompidou). As mentioned previously, Spies included in the illustrations a reproduction of the small engraving from La Nature showing the experiment on sense perception discovered by Stokes. Curiously, he did not discuss the motif of the ball in relation to Ernst's fresco.


71. Translation and publication were due to Marie Bonaparte, friend and follower of Freud. On this, see Jack J. Spector, The Aesthetics of Freud, a study in Psychoanalysis and Art, New York, Praeger, 1972, pp. 156-158.

73. Werner Spies, in his primary approach to Au premier mot limpide linked it with several other "erotic" works done by Ernst during the same period. However, he did not pursue his analysis on this path. In his 1969 article ("Gärten der Lust," Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 30 juni, p. 22), he wrote:


(Almost all of the works from this period have an erotic content. The composition Au premier mot limpide belongs to the row of emblematic works which started with Oedipus Rex (1922). There also a hand reached for a fruit, for a walnut. The fingers that have grabbed hold of the nut are being bored through by a saw-like device. The painting Les hommes n'en sauront rien (1923) shows a hand caught in a system of threads, and La Belle Jardinière (1923), which was destroyed by the Nazis, gives an even clearer piece of evidence. The fruits that the fair lady gardener is able to pick are the fruits of desire).

74. Lucy Lippard, describing the picture, wrote about the "soaring" analogy to orgasm that she sees in "the pressure to open the rounded or split female form held by the huge hand of authority and the painfully misplaced penetration from the sides by the sharper, smaller phallic forms ("Max Ernst: Passed and Pressing Tensions, p. 16). For Diane Waldman, "the framing device with the hand implies penetration or seduction" (Max Ernst, a retrospective, p. 32). In addition to the sexual overtones of the picture, Carlo Sala sees a connotation of culpability: "En réfléchissant sur le titre, 'Oedipus Rex', nous pouvons mieux entrevoir les
donnees inconscientes de cette représentation ... La signification de ce tableau semble axée autour du sentiment de culpabilité latent chez son auteur. Les mains sont percées et les oiseaux, auxquels Ernst s’est toujours identifié, sont contraints de rester dans une position désagréable par une petite barrière placée au premier plan à côté de leur tête. La noix ouverte représenterait le symbole du sexe féminin et la signification en serait; les doigts qui touchent au sexe seront punis comme Oedipe l'a été" (Max Ernst et la démarche onirique, Paris, Klincksieck, 1970, p. 33.

75. Nicolas Calas explained: "the fingers, pierced by a bow that is also a metal instrument of torture, hold a nut, denoting that Ernst's Oedipal riddle is a tough nut to crack ("eine harte nuss"). The nut is a substitute for testicle; the word nut applies to the spring of a gun as well as the lock of a crossbow. On the strength of these associations, I interpret the riddle to mean that the Oedipal complex is at the root of the fear of castration and murder" ("A tough nut to crack," Art Forum, May 1975, pp. 48-52).

76. Rosalind Krauss interpreted the space of Oedipux Rex as a dream space "where the viewer/dreamer exercises the power of his vision. The hand holds a walnut and a metallic object which pierces both the flesh of the hand and that of the nut. The title of the painting, the nut’s own shape and the fact that it is being pierced, prompt one to read it as a surrogate eye" ("Max Ernst: Speculations provoked by an exhibition," Art Forum, vol. 11, n° 9, May 1973, pp. 37-42).

77. Waldman, Max Ernst, a retrospective, p. 32.

78. Double-entendres abound in Ernst's work. From his famous "Phallustrade," to the title itself of La Femme 100 têtes, via
several of the Eaubonne pictures, Ernst has proved his expertise in handling words and images in a way they had never been used before.

79. A simple study of the string design with the naked eye reveals Max Ernst's underdrawing. Without doubt Ernst meant to print an "M." The two middle strokes came to an acute angle which is still apparent and extends slightly underneath the red and blue thumb-pin.

An "X" symbolized by two crossed fingers is not new. In Au rendez-vous des amis, Max, obviously referring to himself, crosses two fingers of his right hand.

80. Max's attachment to Gala, and hers to him, lasted beyond their return from Indochina. Several unpublished letters from Max to Gala -- which I was permitted to read (private collection) -- and dating from late 1926 and early 1927, give evidence that an affectionate relationship still existed between them.

81. Eluard's taste for this type of relationship is not secret (See, for instance, J.C. Gateau, Paul Eluard et la peinture surréaliste, p. 152). His recently published letters to Gala confirm the fact (Lettres à Gala 1924-1948, pp. 32 and 138-139).


84. According to Werner Spies, Ernst read the matching texts only in certain instances ("Max m'a lui-même confirmé qu'il ne lisait les textes d'accompagnement que dans certains cas," Max Ernst: Les
collages, p. 115). Several pictures included in the Eaubonne program show that Ernst very often carefully read the texts.

85. Gateau, _Eluard et la peinture surréaliste_, p. 87.


87. This image pleased Ernst so much that he was to reuse it in his roman collage _La femme 100 têtes_ (plate 99).

88. _Le Magasin Pittoresque_, 1882, p. 376.

89. Ernst designed for _View_ (2d series, no. 1, Max Ernst Number, April 1942) a two-page spread providing a list of his favorite poets and painters. The names include such poets as Lautréamont, Carroll, Rimbaud, Jarry, Blake; among the painters are Seurat, Grünewald, Brueghel, Chirico. According to the size of the letters and the importance given to the names in the layout, Bosch came second among his favorite painters of the past.


91. _Max Ernst: Collagen, Inventar und Widerspruch_ was published in 1974 in Cologne. The French translation (_Max Ernst: Les collages, inventaire et contradictions_) was not released until 1984, but short excerpts of the text were included ("Une poétique du collage") in the 1982 catalogue for the exhibition _Eluard et ses amis peintres_ (Centre Georges Pompidou).
CONCLUSION

The dismantling of any fresco ensemble -- be it ancient or contemporary -- is always a delicate enterprise whose radical aspect is open to criticism. The procedure followed by Cécile Eluard, Robert Valette and André-François Petit in the recovery of the Eaubonne murals has, indeed, been criticized. There were, however, few options. Keeping the house and its remaining decoration intact would have required not only time, understanding and cooperation, but also a great deal of money. In the late sixties raising funds to preserve the Eluard home and its paintings might have proved disappointing, especially since the murals belonged to a little known period in Ernst's career.

With the passing of time, the recovery of the Eaubonne decorations appears now as a major contribution to our knowledge of Ernst's early work. Both the Cologne period, famous for its many collages and assemblages, and the period beginning in 1925, characterized by the systematic use of semi-automatic techniques such as frottage and grattage, are very well documented. Ernst's first Parisian period, which served as a transition between these two phases remains however rather obscure. Conceived within a short period of time and homogeneous in its concept, the Eaubonne cycle brings a new light on Ernst's work of the early twenties. The consequences of collage, in all their extreme and sometimes unexpected aspects, were explored by Ernst while composing his paintings for Paul and Gala Eluard. Collage -- visual if not actual -- and the translation of dreams and desires seem to have been the main components of these murals.
Less radically aggressive than the earlier Dada images, the Eaubonne paintings also contain signs of Ernst's later developments. His "jungles" of the mid-thirties (La joie de vivre, 1935; La nymphe écho, 1936) owe something to the large fresco Histoire Naturelle, as do his various Paysage au germe de blé (1934-1935). The hand motif abundantly exploited in Eaubonne is also a recurrent theme in the Loplop series (1931-1933). More important perhaps, although less obvious, is the seminal role of Cécile's frieze. With its seemingly irrational images, its sequential organization, and its subtle inner logic, this element of the Eaubonne decoration may be thought of as an embryonic form of Ernst's later romans-collage. (La femme 100 têtes, 1929; Une semaine de bonté, 1934). Ernst did not write captions or give any explanation to help us decipher Cécile's frieze, but he obviously did not paint this sequence of images at random. The elaboration of the little composite tableaux and the astute use of transition devices between them clearly demonstrate how carefully this decoration was planned.

The Eaubonne cycle, moreover, occupies a unique place in Ernst's oeuvre. Never again did Ernst work on such a large fresco ensemble. This program is also the first manifestation of Ernst's penchant for decorating his dwellings. The few existing photographs of Ernst's studio and apartment in Cologne where he lived after his marriage to Lou Strauss (figs. 22-24) reveal several identified works (for instance, the 1917 watercolor Tierformen, Sternung and the 1920 wooden assemblage l'état c'est MOI), but the walls themselves are covered with ordinary wall paper. A postcard sent to Tzara on March 21, 1922, while the Eluardes were staying in Cologne, reveals the painter's desire to modify, animate or enhance his everyday environment. On the picture showing the dining room of the Hotel Kaletsch in Dusseldorf, Ernst has added a wall decoration which includes a nude female torso and a bird's head (fig. 228). But not until Eaubonne did he radically transform spaces and walls into an environment which was both a magical bestiary and an ominous pantheon.
In several of his later residences, Ernst developed large complexes of exterior decoration. Saint-Martin d'Ardèche in 1938-1939, and Huismes (early sixties) in France, and Sedona in Arizona (late forties), were all given extensive sculpture elements either set in exterior walls or standing free at the periphery of the buildings. The crucial role of Eaubonne for the artist's later achievements in this domain should be noted. A quick overall comparison between Eaubonne and the subsequent decorative programs undertaken by Ernst is enlightening.

Although the media were different -- wall painting as opposed to sculpture -- all of these projects present common features. The use of a frieze system, first experimented with in Cécile's bedroom, was seen again on the exterior walls of Sedona (figs. 230-231). In both cases, the decorative elements were lifted from the artist's vocabulary in the specific time-frame considered and grafted or applied to the wall, as if he had wanted to leave an indelible imprint of his passage.

More striking perhaps is the prominent position given to several life-size or over life-size figures. Introduced in Eaubonne with the nude Gala (Il ne faut pas voir la réalité telle que je suis), this solution was repeated over and over again. In the old farmhouse of Saint-Martin d'Ardèche, where he lived with Leonora Carrington, Ernst decorated one of the facades with two huge relief sculptures depicting nude figures. One is obviously female, the other with raised arms is part man-part bird (fig. 229). In Sedona, where he settled for several years with Dorothea Tanning, Max Ernst made -- in addition to the relief frieze already mentioned -- a monumental free-standing sculpture that he called The Capricorn (fig. 232). Here again we find the male image associated with the female nude, but this time both man and woman have been given dual characteristics. The Capricorn has a bull's head; his female companion is a mermaid. Later, in Huismes, Max Ernst enlivened the garden wall of his home with a series of large nude figures (figs. 233-234). These were not Ernst's creations (they once
belonged to a destroyed nineteenth-century building), but by incorporating these sculptures in his familiar environment Ernst had given them a new dimension.

Haunting, gigantic figures -- gods and goddesses, idols and augurs -- must have had some personal significance for Max Ernst. He repeatedly turned to them, as if urged by the desire to put his dwellings under some tutelary protection or to circumscribe his private, intimate territory. Under this light, Eaubonne is the first, and the most original, of these inspired places.
Notes


2. As far as is known, Ernst only painted one other ceiling motif -- that done for his friend, the French writer and poet Joe Bousquet. A few years after his work in Éaunon, Gérard Guyomard was asked to remove this ceiling decoration and to transfer it onto canvas. The date of completion is not known, but here again Ernst had worked spontaneously. Joe Bousquet, critically wounded during the First World War, was confined to his bed and armchair. Out of pure friendship, Ernst decided to enliven his friend's quarters in Carcassonne by painting a large flight of birds on the ceiling (Gérard Guyomard, interview, October 29, 1984).

The fairly large mural (538 x 400 cm) that Ernst painted in 1934 for the "Corso-Bar" in Zurich should also be mentioned. Commissioned by the owner of the bar, Bruno Sequin, this wall decoration is now in the Zurich Kunsthalle (on this, see Carola Gedion-Welker, "Max Ernst's wanderbild von 1934 für die Corso-Bar in Zurich," Werk, 53, January 1966, pp. 32-33.

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RICE UNIVERSITY

MAX ERNST: MURALS

FOR THE HOME OF PAUL AND GALA ELUARD.

EAUBONNE, 1923

by

Beatrix Blavier

VOLUME II
LIST OF REPRODUCTIONS

Titles and dimensions of works by Max Ernst are given in the form used by Gunter Metken and Werner Spies in the catalogue raisonné. Collections are also indicated according to the catalogue, except when known changes have occurred. For the works not included in the catalogue dimensions were taken by the author. Tentative titles are indicated in parentheses.

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8. Le mugissement des féroces soldats, 1919, printer's proof on paper altered with pencil and ink, 38 x 27 cm.

9. Francis Picabia, Mouvement Dada, 1919, ink on paper, 51 x 36.2 cm.
10. Adieu mon beau pays de Marie Laurencin, 1919, printer’s proof on paper altered with pencil and ink, 40 x 28 cm.
11. Francis Picabia, *Portrait de Marie Laurencin*, *Four in Hand*, ca. 1916-1917, ink and water color on cardboard, 56 x 45.3 cm.
12. *Objet ambigu*, 1919, printer's proof on paper altered with pencil and ink, 26 x 39 cm.

14. Démonstration hydrométrique à tuer la température, 1920, collage on paper altered with gouache, ink and pencil, 24 x 17 cm.
15. Lehrmittel catalogue, Cologne, 1914, p. 756, turned upside down.
16. Les moutons, 1921, collage on paper altered with gouache, reproduced in Paul Eluard’s Répétitions, p. 25, 11.2 x 16 cm.
17. Lehrmittel catalogue, Cologne, 1914, p. 236.
18. _Le rossignol chinois_, 1920, collage
on paper altered with ink, 12.2 x 8.8 cm.
19. *Un peu malade le cheval*, 1920, collage and gouache on paper
16 x 23 cm.
20. Max Ernst and Hans Arp: *Fatagaga*, La Suisse, lieu de naissance de Dada or *Physiomythologisches diluvialbild*, 1920, photomontage, 11.2 x 10 cm.
Le Domestique Mystique

Glauque coagulé est un médicament comme la conclusion hollandaise des lampes électriques mur écoulé sur la corde nière de l'arène et le taureau c'est là l'occasion de l'exil du filet conjonctif que lui a servi d'exemple conjugal ni serpentin ni couleur mit tout son bien sur la voirellette d'enfant et voilà c'est-à-dire que son capital en tourbillons inverses en commençant l'époque et la branche de l'œuf et du phono-gramme capable et macabre.

Tristan TZARA.*

* je m'appelle dorénavant exclusivement Monsieur Paul Bourget.

QUEST-CE QU'ON ATTEND ?
Une femme ?
Deux arbres ?
Trois drapeaux ?

Rien.

ÇA VEXT DIRE ÇEQUE ÇA VEXT DIRE
ÇA NE VEXT PAS DIRE ÇEQUE ÇA NE VEXT PAS DIRE.

Entendu dans la rue : "Il n'y a plus qu'à tirer l'échelle, les artistes du mouvement BABA sont aussi des humains."

Autre impression (dans la presse) : "Pour une revue, c'est une revue."

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Il faut violer les règles, oui, mais pour les violer il faut les connaître.
Il faut connaître les règles, oui, mais pour les connaître il faut les violer.
Il faut régler la connaissance, oui, mais pour la régler il faut la violer.
Il faut violer la connaissance, oui, mais pour la violer il faut la régler.

---

From left to right: Gala, Max, Baargeld, Lou, Paul with Jimmy Ernst.
23. Cologne, November 1921.

From left to right: Baargeld, Lou, Gala, Paul, and Max,
24. Cologne, November 1921

From left to right: Lou, Max, Gala, Jimmy Ernst, and Paul
25. Portrait of Paul Eluard, 1921,
ioil on glass, 30.5 x 42.5 cm.
26. L'invention, 1921, collage, reproduced in Paul Eluard's Répétitions, p. 10, 10.5 x 7.8 cm.
DADA

INTITULÉ

DERRANGEMENT DER SANGEKRIEG

TARRENS B INST 16 SEPTEMBRE 1916 – 1921 1 FE 2 JUL
EN DEPOT AU SANS PAREIL 37 AVENUE KLEBER PARIS

MAX ERNST: Die Lernbreitung aus Knochen
La préparation de la colle d'os

NET

Un ami de New-York nous dit qu'il connaît un pick-pocket littéraire; il s'agit de Fangier, célèbre moraliste, qui vend la musique avec assurances de voyage.

Tzara envoya à Breton une boîte de souvenirs conservés dans du fil d'arnaque et une carte de voeux avec des indications pour sa transformation en poudre d'abatilles. Il est arrivé à Tarreens 10, le 10 par le train morgue du plateau et des casquettes.

Le titre de ce journal appartient à Napa Chiana.

Wir haben gestern Hörnerabenteuer in Parzing und haben sie auf.

Arp visse S.G.H. Tarzuber sur le front d'une fleur.

Dans la catalogue du salon Dada il se trouve une erreur que nous avons à corriger: le tableau monocrome de Marcel Duchamp "Maxer" n'est pas daté de 1914, comme on voulait nous faire croire, mais de 1913. Ce premier tableau monocrome a été peint à Munich.

Le baron Arnaud de Cugudes, connu dans l'histoire sous le nom du Crustat, a organisé devant des invités, sur ses dommages à Tarreens, un banquet pour les parents des arrières.

Maintenant que nous sommes marins, nous chercherions une mer toujours mystérieuse. En Espagne on ne consomme pas avec les membres de sa famille, dit Marie Laurich.

Tzara envoya à Sopauyet 4 bouteilles en éprouvette molle, 2 aguilles pour l'empoisonnement des arbres, un polypé parfaitement à 12 doigts, un lait venu et agité et une pomme noire en guise de cadeau. A lui les sagesse des sages coeurs.


Panayot a inventé le décalque en 1890, le Cahiers en 1875, le futurisme en 1917 et l'impressionnisme en 1926. En 1907 il a rencontré Nietzsche, en 1923 il remarqua qu'il n'était que le pseudonyme de Condues. En 1910 au lieu de perdre un moment sur la place de la Garesc, il inventa le maillot. Les peintres de la guerre de la guerre de la guerre, en tous les canaux dans l'existence de ses tableaux et dans les bénéfices du bonheur.

Tzara envoya à Marcel Duchamp: des bonbons d'amour trempés dans du whisky séché et un mousetraps muni de cuisines vivantes de paille.

A Max Ray: une carte postale transparente avec des montagnes et le reste, et un frigider qui parle français à l'approche d'un magnéto.

A Marguerite Buffet, un paquet de chocolat à la hoummous ainsi que des cartes musicales d'une qualité tout-à-fait exceptionnelle.

Paris (XII), 12 rue de Boulainvilliers.

TRISTAN TZARA

27. Dada au grand air – Der Sangerkrieg in Tirol,
(Dada n° 8), summer 1922, p. 1.
28. *La préparation de la colle d'os*, 1921,
*oil on canvas, 70 x 110 cm.*
29. Eléphant Célèbes, 1921,

oil on canvas, 125 x 108 cm.
30. Corn-bin, Konkombwa people, Sudan,
(photograph Major H. H. Schomburgh).
ET SUIVANT VOTRE CAS

LA SÉRIE DES JEUNES FEMMES

I

Placer la femme à une dizaine de mètres d'un siège sur lequel on vient s'asseoir.
Appeler la femme et lui recommander de venir en courant. Elle place, sans s'arrêter, les mains suffisamment en avant sur vos cuisses et saute à califourchon aussi loin que possible. Elle descend tantôt à droite, tantôt à gauche, rejoignant son point de départ en courant et revient ainsi de deux à cinq fois.

31. Au dernier saut retenir la femme à cheval ...
(La série des jeunes femmes), Littérature, nouvelle série, n° 7, ler décembre 1922, p. 8, 7 x 7.5 cm.

II

La femme couchée sur une surface plane, une table par exemple, recouverte d'une couverture pliée en deux.
Lui présenter l'objet en le plaçant au-dessus de la tête et dans son rayon visuel. Abaisser l'objet progressivement pour que la femme le suive du regard, soulève la tête d'abord puis la fléchisse, le menton venant en contact avec la poitrine.
Tenir ainsi un petit instant et revenir tout doucement à la position de départ. Il est préférable que l'objet soit brillant ou de couleur vive.

32. Assoir la femme sur la table ...
(La série des jeunes femmes), Littérature, nouvelle série, ler décembre 1922, p. 9, 5 x 4.5 cm.

Asseoir la femme sur la table, la laisser disposer les bras et les jambes à son gré.
Attirer son attention avec l'objet placé au-dessus de sa tête, le déplacer, l'abaisser vers la droite, continuer le mouvement vers le bas puis remonter vers la gauche. Reprendre ce même exercice vers la gauche.
Toujours tenir l'objet assez éloigné pour que la femme ne puisse le saisir. Ne le lui abandonner que pour la récompenser de ses efforts.

Paul Eluard et Max Ernst.
33. Pietà ou la Révolution la nuit, 1923, oil on canvas, 116 x 89 cm.
34. Long Live Love - Pays charmant, 1923,

oil on canvas, 131.5 x 98 cm.
35. Gala, illustration for "Au défaut du silence"
p. 10, 13 x 12.8 cm.
(printed motif).

36. Gala, illustration for "Au défaut du silence"
p. 10, 13 x 12.8 cm.
(printed motif).
37. Eaubonne, detail of Michelin map, "Environs de Paris" (reduced format)
38. Eaubonne, The gate to the Eluard House,
   October 1984.
39. Gala in Eaubonne, ca. 1924.


44-45. Untitled ("The Flying Angel"), 1923, Eaubonne, entry hall, 43.7 x 186 cm., October 1984.
46. Eaubonne, entry hall, detail of the tile floor, October 1984.
47. *Il ne faut pas voir la réalité telle que je suis*, 1923, oil on plaster transferred onto canvas, 175 x 80 cm.
49. Il ne faut pas voir la réalité telle que je suis, in situ,
Eaubonne, November 1967.
50. *Merveilles vous dansez sur les sources du ciel*, 1923, oil on plaster transferred onto canvas, 100 x 100 cm.
53. Untitled ("The Door with the Hands"), 1923, oil on wood, 205 x 80 cm.
54. ("The Door with the Hands")
cleaning process, Guyomard's
55. *La Main verte*, 1923, oil on plaster transferred onto canvas, 40.4 x 65 cm.

58. *Entrer, Sortir*, 1923, door panel, oil on wood 205 x 80 cm.

61. ("The Butterfly"), cleaning process,
62-63. Untitled ("The Butterfly"), present state, overall dimensions, 218 x 151 cm; upper panels 97.3 x 61.2 cm each; lower panels 68.2 x 61.2 cm each.
64. Au premier mot limpide, 1923,
oil on plaster transferred onto canvas,
232 x 167 cm.
65. Histoire Naturelle, 1923,
oil on plaster transferred onto canvas
232 x 354 cm.
66. Paul and Gala Eluard's bedroom, detail of northeast corner with *Au premier mot limpide* and *Histoire Naturelle* in situ, November 1967.
67. Au premier mot limide and Histoire Naturelle,
in situ, Eaubonne, November 1967.
68. Au premier mot limpide
and Histoire Naturelle, in situ ca. 1923-1924,
Bulletin de l'Effort Moderne, n° 12,
February 1925, n.p.
69. Paul and Gala's bedroom, detail of southeast corner with the two doors and *Histoire Naturelle* in situ, November 1967.
70. Untitled ("Trompe-l'oeil Door"), in situ, November 1967, dimensions unknown.
71. *Ici l'action se simplifie*, 1923,

oil on plaster transferred onto canvas,

39 x 18 cm.
72. *Il n'y a plus de vraies hydrocyclettes*, 1923,
oil on plaster transferred onto canvas, 46 x 140 cm.

73. *Il n'y a plus de vraies hydrocyclettes*, in situ,
November 1967.
74. Cécile's frieze, detail of northwest corner with *Il n'y a plus de vraies hydrocycletes* and *Cantique* in situ, November 1967.
75. *Cantique*, 1923, oil on plaster transferred onto canvas
43 x 85 cm.

77. Rien n'est incompréhensible, 1923,  
oil on plaster transferred onto canvas,   
43 x 150 cm.

78. Rien n'est incompréhensible, in situ, November 1967.
79. Les labyrinthes ne sont pas faits pour les chiens, 1923,
oil on plaster transferred onto canvas, 43 x 122 cm.

80. Les labyrinthes ne sont pas faits pour les chiens, in situ,
November 1967.
81. Cécile's frieze, detail of northeast corner with
les Labyrinthes ne sont pas faits pour les chiens
and Conseils d'ami in situ, November 1967.
82. Conseils d'amis, 1923, oil on plaster transferred onto canvas, 43 x 110 cm.

84. Autant rêver d'ouvrir les portes de la mer, 1923,
oil on plaster transferred onto canvas, 43 x 164 cm.

85. Autant rêver d'ouvrir les portes de la mer, in situ,
November 1967.
86. Cécile's frieze, east wall with *Conseils d'ami*,
*Autant rêver d'ouvrir les portes de la mer*, and
87. Réveil officiel du serin, 1923, oil on plaster transferred onto canvas, 43 x 114 cm.

89. Réveil officiel du serin, in situ,
November 1967.
90. *Fin de circonstances*, 1923, oil on plaster transferred onto canvas, 43 x 61 cm.

91. Cécile’s frieze, detail of southeast corner with *Rêveil officiel du serin* and *Fin de circonstances* in situ, November 1967.
92. Les oiseaux ne peuvent disparaître, 1923,
oil on plaster transferred onto canvas, 43 x 96 cm.

93. Les oiseaux ne peuvent disparaître in situ,
November 1967.
95. Cécile's frieze, detail of southwest corner with Les oiseaux ne peuvent disparaître and "The House" motif in situ behind the mirror, November 1967.
94. *Untitled* ("The House" motif), 1923,

oil on plaster transferred onto canvas, 43 x 144 cm.
97. Eaubonne, deuxième étage, "La chambre rouge," southwest corner
detail of red paint found under wall paper,
November 1967.
98. Éaubonne, deuxième étage, northeast corner of cabinet de toilette, detail of investigation, showing underpaint, November 1967.
99. Eaubonne, deuxième étage, north window in
Ernst's atelier, November 1967.
100. (Magicien), 1921, collage on paper mounted on cardboard, 13 x 11.5 cm.

102. (Enfant), 1921, collage on paper mounted on cardboard, 11 x 14.3 cm.

103. "Appareil pour l'enseignement de la natation,"
La Nature, 1893, II, 221.
104. Plaisirs oubliés, 1922, collage reproduced in
Les Malheurs des immortels,
p. 30, dimensions from the book
5.8 x 8.8 cm.

105. "Lecture à volonté avec l'œil droit
ou l'œil gauche, les deux étant ouverts,"
106. Mon petit Mont Blanc, 1922, collage reproduced in
Les Malheurs des immortels, p. 8,
dimensions from the book 8.3 x 10.7 cm.

107. "Pistolet à flèche pneumatique,"
La Nature, 1890, II, 128.
108. Oedipus Rex, 1922, oil on canvas, 83 x 102 cm.

110. ("Flying Angel"), 1923, oil on plaster,
43.7 x 186 cm.

111. "Vélocipédistes acrobates,"
La Nature, 1893, II, 80
112. Merveilles vous dansez sur les sources du ciel, 1923,
oil on plaster transferred onto canvas, 100 x 100 cm.
113. "Le ballon de Lana,"
*Magasin Pittoresque*, 1837, 8.

114. "Projet de bateau volant, fantaisie scientifique du Jésuite Lana," Louis Figuier,
115. "Jeune femme gymnaste
descendant du faîte du
théâtre," *La Nature*, 1885,
II, 248.

116. "Amphitrite," (La
Physique amusante), *La Nature*,
1889, I, 96.
117. *Il ne faut pas voir la réalité telle que je suis*,
1923, oil on plaster transferred onto canvas, 175 x 80 cm.
118. *Anatomie jeune mariée*, 1921, collage (photograph), 23.7 x 17.2 cm.
119. *Santa conversazione*,
1921, collage (photograph),
22.5 x 13.5 cm.

120. *La belle jardinière*,
c. 1921-1922, gouache and
ink on paper, 27 x 20 cm.
121. *La Belle Jardinière*, painting, 1923, oil on canvas,
196 x 114 cm.
122. Hans Baldung-Grien, Genital situs of a seated woman.

123. Arnauld-Eloi Gautier d'Agoty, engraving from *L'anatomie des parties de la Génération de l'Homme de la Femme,"* 1773.
124. Die Anatomie Selbdritt (or Le module de l'homme), 1921, frottage on paper, 18 x 36 cm.
125. *Femme-oiseau* (or *La parole*), 1921, collage reproduced in *Répétitions*, p. 16, 18.5 x 10.6 cm.

126. *Un homme peut en cacher un autre*, 1923, wash, gouache and ink on paper, 64 x 48.5 cm.
127. *Le couple* (or *Le couple en dentelle*), 1923,

*oil on canvas, 101.5 x 142 cm.*
128. *Le couple* (or *L'accolade*), 1924,
    oil on canvas, 73 x 54 cm.
129. Les hommes n'en sauront rien, 1923, oil on canvas
80.5 x 64 cm.
130. Detail from *Les hommes n'en sauront rien*
with half the image cancelled, to show underlying symmetry.

(Fred Gettings, *The Hidden Art*,
A Study of occult symbolism in
*Art*, p. 197).
131. *La femme chancelante*, 1923, oil on canvas
130.5 x 97.5 cm.
132. Sainte-Cécile, (or Le piano invisible), 1923,
 oil on canvas, 101 x 82 cm.
133. *Entrer, Sortir*, 1923,
door panel, oil on wood,
205 x 80 cm.
136. *Femme, vieillard et fleur*, 1923–24, oil on canvas, 97 x 130 cm.

137. *Weiss, Greis und Blume* (or *Femme, vieillard, et fleur I*), 1923, 97 x 130 cm.
138. Philipp Ernst, Portrait of Max Ernst as the Christ Child, 1896.
139. Giorgio di Chirico, Canto d'Amore, 1914,
oil on canvas, 73 x 59.1 cm.
140. Giorgio di Chirico, 
_The Dream of the Poet_, ca. 
1914, oil on canvas, 
87.7 x 40.8 cm.

141. Giorgio di Chirico, 
_Portrait of Guillaume 
Apollinaire_, 1914, oil on 
canvas, 81.5 x 65 cm.
142. ("The Door with the Hands") 1923, door panel, oil on wood, 205 x 80 cm.
143. *La main verte*, 1923, oil on plaster transferred onto canvas, 40.4 x 65 cm.

144. "Expérience sur la capillardé et la densité des liquides,"

*La Nature*, 1887, I, 96.
145. *Au rendez-vous des amis*, 1922, oil on canvas, 129.5 x 193 cm.

le cubisme construit une cathédrale en pâte de foie artistique
l'expressionnisme empoisonne les sardines artistiques
le simultanéisme en est encore à sa première communion artistique
le futurisme veut monter dans un tyranisme + ascenseur artistique
l'unanimité embrasse le toutisme et pêche à la ligne artistique
le néo-classicisme découvre les bienfaits de l'art artistique
le paroxysme fait le tryst de tous les fromages artistiques
l'utérisme recommande le mélange de ces 7 choses artistiques
le créacionisme le vorticisme l'imagination proposent aussi quelques recettes artistiques

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50 francs de récompense à celui qui trouve le moyen de nous expliquer

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*Paris 13 Janvier 1921.*

Pour toute information

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147. Dada soulève tout, leaflet, Paris, January 3-12, 1921.
148. ("The Butterfly"), 1923, oil on wood, overall dimensions: 218 x 151 cm; upper panels 97.3 cm x 61.2 cm each; lower panels 68.2 x 61.2 cm each.
150. Le singe bleu à la fleur, 1922,
oil on canvas, 63 x 50 cm.
151. **Au premier mot limpide**, 1923, oil on plaster transferred onto canvas, 232 x 167 cm.
152. Au premier mot limpide, in situ, November 1967, detail of hand with graffiti.
154. "Appareil servant à mesurer la force musculaire des insectes,"

La Nature, 1881, I, 300.
155. Giorgio di Chirico,
*The Square*, 1913, oil on canvas, 56 x 47 cm.

156. Giorgio di Chirico,
*The Philosopher's Conquest*,
1914, oil on canvas,
125.7 x 100.3 cm.
157. Giorgio di Chirico, *L'énigme de la fatalité*, 1914, oil on canvas, 138 x 95.5 cm.
158. *Histoire Naturelle*, 1923, oil on plaster
transferred onto canvas, 232 x 354 cm.
159. *Au premier mot limpide* and *Histoire Naturelle* in situ,
Paul and Gala's bedroom, northeast corner.
160. Dada Gauguin, 1920,
collage on paper altered with gouache and ink,
29 x 40 cm.
161. Paysage aux feuilles, ca. 1920,
collage, gouache and ink, 21.5 x 26 cm.
Bois. Plantes de jardins.

165. "Paysages du monde primitif,"
Magasin Pittoresque, 1878, 268.
166. "Paysages du monde primitif,"

Magasin Pittoresque, 1878, 269.
167. "Fruits du poivrier,"

*Magasin Pittoresque*, 1881, 349.
168. "Le nègre grimpeur,"

169. "Le mat de cocagne (after Goya), Magasin Pittoresque, 1880, 177.
170. "Coupe verticale montrant l'intérieur d'une fourmilière."

Magasin Pittoresque, 1885, 265.
171. "Vue intérieure d'un galerie de fourmies à miel,"
*La Nature*, 1883, II, 309.

172. "Le gîte de la taupe,"
*Magasin Pittoresque*, 1884, 341.
174. "Casin de Raphael,
*Magasin Pittoresque*, 1841, 353.

175. "La Villa Borghèse, à
Rome," *Magasin Pittoresque*,
1866, 217.
176. "Tamanoir se défendant contre un jaguar,"

179. ("Trompe-l'oeil Door"), in situ, 1967, dimensions unknown.
180. *Sentiments mêlés*, 1923, oil on canvas,
48 x 59.5 cm.
181. Apollon refuse constamment de marier
la fille unique de l'archéologue ...., 1920,
collage, gouache, ink and pencil, 4 x 15.2 cm.
182. Il n'y a plus de vraies hydrocyclettes, 1923, oil on plaster transferred onto canvas, 46 x 140 cm.
183. "Fantassin à la nage,"

184. Untitled, 1921, collage
reproduced in Répétitions,
p. 50, 5.5 x 10.2 cm.

185. Untitled, 1921, collage
6.4 x 12.7 cm.
186. "Le Canard mandarin, Canard à éventail, ou Sarcelle de la Chine,"

Magasin Pittoresque, 1880, 273.

189. "Couteau à patisserie du dix-septième siècle,"
Magasin Pittoresque, 1881, 352.

190. "Nouvel appareil de natation américain,"
191. *Cantique*, 1923, oil on plaster transferred onto canvas, 43 x 85 cm.
192. "Costume d'Orient,"
Magasin Pittoresque, 1888, 8.
193. "Venise au dix-huitième siècle," after Zampini,
Magasin Pittoresque, 1865, 388.
194. Rien n'est incompréhensible, 1923,
oil on plaster transferred onto canvas,
43 x 150 cm.
195. "Le langage des singes,"

*La Nature*, 1892, I, 152.
196. "La Rainette verte,"
Magasin Pittoresque, 1880, 165.
197. "La Place du Cap, à Menton,"

Magasin Pittoresque, 1882, 349.
198. "Abbotsford,"

Magasin Pittoresque, 1880, 65.
199. *Les Labyrinthes ne sont pas faits pour les chiens*,
1923, oil on plaster transferred onto canvas,
43 x 122 cm.

200. *(Inspeizierung eines Pferdes)*, ca. 1923,
 oil on canvas, 65 x 98 cm.
201. "Le Carrosse du marquis éclaboussé,"
Magasin Pittoresque, 1888, 237.
202. "Intérieur de l'Eglise Saint-Etienne, Lille,"

*Magasin Pittoresque*, 18...?, 404.
203. Conseils d'ami, 1923, oil on plaster
    transferred onto canvas, 43 x 110 cm.
204. "Le Pie di Marmo, à Rome,"
Magasin Pittoresque, 1886, 345.
205. "Mise à l'eau d'un bateau de sauvetage,"

Pl. 183. Gentiane acaule. Gentiana acaulis... 

Famille des Gentianées

206. Désiré Bois, Atlas des Plantes de France, 1891, pl. 188.
Fig. 1. — Appareil pour l'exécution de chronophotographies d'une raie en mouvement.

Fig. 2. — Photographies d'une raie pendant la nage, exécutées de côté. Les images se succèdent de bas en haut.

Fig. 3. — Photographies extrémités de face. Les images se succèdent de bas en haut.

207. "Mouvements de natation de la raie,"

La Nature, 1893, I, 177.
208. **Autant rêver d'ouvrir les portes de la mer**, 1923,
oil on plaster transferred onto canvas, 34 x 164 cm.
210. "Canalisations électriques à Paris,"

La Nature, 1889, II, 140.

211. Zodiac Pisces, from the West Front of Amiens Cathedral,
13th century.
212. Réveil officiel du serin, 1923,  
oil on plaster transferred onto canvas  
43 x 114 cm.

213. "Cuiller à parfum Egyptienne,"  
Magasin Pittoresque, 1882, 376.
214. Vogel, *Fische-Schlange*, ca. 1921,
oil on canvas, 58 x 62.8 cm.
Pl. 268. A. Safran à fleur jaune. Crocus luteus Lami.

B. Safran printanier. Crocus vernus Ait.

Famille des Iridées.

216. "Périophtalmes, Poissons terrestres,"
Magasin Pittoresque, 1886, 394.
217. Hieronymus Bosch, Jardín de las Delicias, ca. 1500,
detail of right wing of the triptych.
218. _Fin de circonstances_ 1923, oil on plaster transferred onto canvas

43 x 61 cm.
Famille des Nymphéacées.

Pl. 8. Nigelle d'Espagne. Nigella hispanica L.

Famille des Ranunculacées.

220. Désiré Bois, Atlas des Plantes de France, 1891, pl. 8
221. Les oiseaux ne peuvent disparaître, 1923,
       oil on plaster transferred onto canvas,
       43 x 96 cm.

222. "Griffe de fourmi,"
       Le Magasin Pittoresque,
       1885, 264.
223. *Le Fugitif*, 1922, collage
reproduced in *Les malheurs des immortels*
p. 42, 17 x 10.8 cm.
224. *Castor et Pollution*, 1923, oil on canvas,  
ca. 120 x 150 cm.

225. "*Du sifflet chez les peuples primitifs,*"  
*La Nature*, 1892, I, 228.
226. "Bateau sous-marin, système Goubet, adopté par la marine russe,"

228. **Humor-Ecke des Hotel Kaletsch, Dusseldorf**
postcard altered with pencil, March 21, 1922,
9.5 x 14.5 cm.
230. The "hieroglyphic" frieze, Ernst's house, Sedona, 1951.

231. Concrete frieze on outside wall of Ernst's house, Sedona, 1952.
232. Max Ernst, Dorothea Tanning and The Capricorn (1948), Sedona, 1951.