

The Essays of Daniel Barbiero by Jose Miguel Perez

Four years ago in *Surrealismo Internacional*, we referred to two very interesting essays by the essayist, double bassist and composer Daniel Barbiero about surrealism and myth (*Familiar Monsters*) and about an encounter with a metal mask as recounted by André Breton in his *Mad Love*, both of which appeared in *Arteidolia*.

Now, we take notice not only of another magnificent essay on the convergence of dream with waking state and the phenomena of objective chance (in short, on the major questions raised by Breton in the second manifesto), but of a book published by the magazine itself, where Daniel Barbiero compiles many of his essays (twenty in total) for *Arteidolia*. These essays date from 2015 to 2021 and are grouped under the title (already a find in itself) *As Within So Without*, a variant formulation of the most important phrase of hermetic philosophy that draws on André Breton, who is the starting point for many of Barbiero's reflections and whose phrase from *Le Marvielleux contre le mystère* heads the book, along with a quote each from Heraclitus and Wallace Stevens.

Although musical essays predominate, there are many others that deal with surrealism, and what's more, one that considers the Bretonian position on music (a human paradox that I also share in, despite my always listening to music), which touches along the way on the example of Souris and other musicians interested in surrealism such as Varèse, Antheil and Boulec.

One of the essays is devoted to the *Angelus Novus*, a Paul Klee oil painting bought by Walter Benjamin that inspired his theory of the Angel of History. Another consists of seven theses on "the emotional life of words," another Breton expression from *Le Marvielleux contre le mystère*. *The Silver Age of Surrealism* takes us to Canada and the States with thought provoking stopovers at the Great Transparent and the novel and decisive contributions of Matta and Paalen. Curiosity about metaphysical painting leads to a focus on both Carrà's work and de Chirico's emblematic *The Enigma of the Hour*. Daniel Barbiero is as interested in painting as in music. In fact, the title of the essay that gives the book its name concludes with *The Painter as Clairvoyant*.

The last of Barbiero's essays that I want to bring attention to is also dedicated to a painting by yet another great artist, in this case, *Imaginary Numbers* by Yves Tanguy, his second to last work before *Multiplication of the Arcs*, and just as extraordinary. Marcel Jean described it as a "great tragic, gloomy and faded vision of whitish cliffs erected above a black sea as livid and distressing objects," and if Charles Duits regarded that final work as equivalent to Van Gogh's landscape of crows and wheat fields, almost the same could be said of *Imaginary Numbers*.

Other than those by Georges Sebbag, Natan Schäfer and occasional others, extensive essays on surrealism are usually not published anymore. And, because of this, we especially need to highlight the appearance of this compilation volume of brilliant and profound essays.