

# TIT-BITS

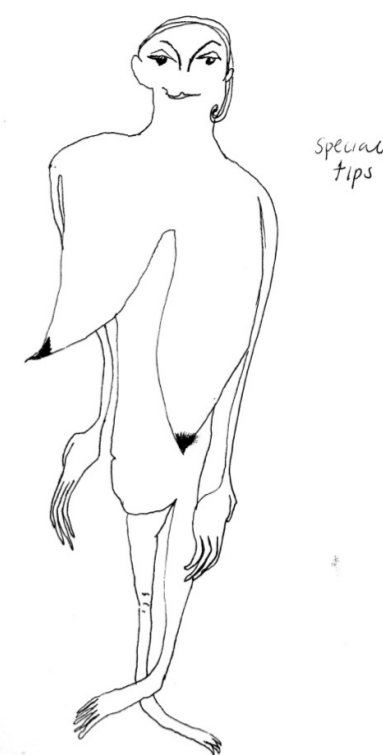
An exhibition of drawings and sculpture by  
Ms Fiona ROBERTSON

ARTIST

14-27 NOVEMBER 2023 9.30-5.30 Weekdays 12-5 Saturday -Preview Friday 17  
November at Southblock Gallery, 60-64 Osborne St., G1 5QH

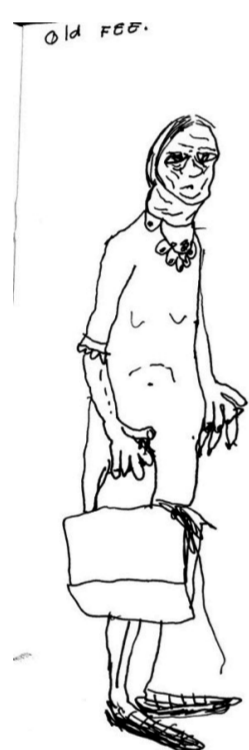


..bits of art...



'Tit-bits'

We insist on everything these days. We say a lot about everything, always afraid of not saying enough. We don't suspect that when we name something it scorches it like a sunburn. Some people don't have enough of a feeling for this phenomenon, so they just go right ahead, naturally happy to recognize things, you see, this flower here, they say, well it's a dahlia. Then the dahlia is scorched, finished. Come and see, they shout, here's a snail! Then suddenly there are no more snails. They leave the place a desert.



END-OF-CAREER ARTIST

I can't help but say a few words about my green jacket that Chassac gave me. What do you want to say in a preface if you don't confide in it a little? I'm interested in beautiful clothes, I like to be well dressed. When I see a nice piece of clothing, a really beautiful, really interesting piece, I want to buy it at any price. (I am very rich). I often wander around Billancourt and Aubervilliers looking for beautiful pieces. But most of the time they refuse to sell them to me, no matter how much I offer, they think it's a joke, that it's for a laugh, that I couldn't possibly pay so much for such common work clothes, of such poor fabric and so worn out. They believe that it is only the martingale jackets in Shetland wool that are valuable and that the others are not, merely jokes. It was Chassac who taught me to dress well.



FIRE

People have very fixed ideas about all sorts of things, and it makes them laugh when one talks about the possibility of other ideas. For example, the people I find beautiful are not the ones we usually find beautiful. For example, a lady with curly hair or pimples is usually considered beautiful. It depends. Funny noses, big mouths, crooked teeth, hair in the ears, I'm not against all that. Older people don't necessarily look any worse than younger people either. Obesity, even excessive obesity (especially excessive), twists, grimaces, wrinkles and funny little dance-ballet wrinkles and little theaters of grimaces and twists, I like that, and people who have a star or a shrub or a map of a river basin across their face interest me much more than the Greeks, and I don't think a little oak tree is necessarily prettier than an old oak, and a little yacht regatta beta doesn't interest me like a dirty trawler full of cod. Obesity, even excessive obesity (especially excessive), twists, grimaces, wrinkles and funny little dance-ballet wrinkles and little theaters of grimaces and twists, I like that, and people who have a star or a shrub or a map of a river basin across their face interest me much more than the Greeks, and I don't think a little oak tree is necessarily prettier than an old oak, and a little yacht regatta doesn't interest me like a dirty trawler full of codfish. It's ideas like these that make people like René Huyghe a lecturer and museum curator (a museum of greeks, post-greeks, neo- greeks). He can't sit still in his office when he hears about ideas like this, it's as if a spring in his armchair propels him forward, and he has to rush to the balcony to make a scene and warn the audience that he senses a joke. He's one of those gentlemen who can smell a joke a mile away.



They say that an exhibition of portraits isn't interesting, but that's like saying that an exhibition of landscapes isn't interesting. I don't see how a gentleman's face is any less interesting a landscape than other landscapes. A gentleman, the physical person of a gentleman, is a small world like any other, a country, with its towns and suburbs, and its fairs, its fields and its wild woods, stagnant ponds and infrequent skirmishes, and there's a whole teeming life as in any other country, trains leaving, trains arriving, winds turning, sunshine and storms. You can spend a good holiday in a gentleman's face, stay there for a while, wander around and travel, it's as good as the Engadine or the Breton moors.



METAMODERNIST

Once I had a landlady who maintained that for a work of art to be very artistic and really beautiful, and really major, it had to be very sad. She said that the most beautiful plays, the most beautiful poems or the most beautiful music were always the saddest, but on this question I never agreed with her.



EXISTENTIALIST

I like to give the characters in my portraits as much of a festive air as possible. What interests me is each person's own way of celebrating, of their own personal party trick, but to tell the truth, no, I don't really believe that everyone possesses such a thing. It's more like a feeling I have for a little tune that plays all across the world, and not just on people's faces, a music that can be found in the trees, in the clouds, in the water, and in the wind. It's this music that I would like to give to my characters. I believe that the most sketchy portrait, the most unformed, if it plays this music, will serve me better than the most diligent one in the world that fails to play this little tune.

Besides, I don't care if you think it's major art or minor art. Minor doesn't really suit me, I even like minor. Just a little art, good for throwing to the wind, that's what I like most of all. Nothing for my landlady. Nothing for Monsieur Huyghe.



PET CORNER

So when someone talks to me about major things or minor things or even about happy things or sad things, or about things that are good and things that are bad, I don't understand this terminology. I don't think that the meadow is wrong to be meadow and the cloud is right to be cloud, and that the snake is badly off for not having any legs or the centipede for having too many, nor that the song sung by the dry tree is less cheerful or less pretty than the song of the flowering apple tree.



'A finger in every pie'

For a portrait to be useful to me, it's important that the character's features are not too strong. Not at all emphasized, on the contrary, rather effaced. Confidential even. Secret things, which not everyone can use, are of interest, and thus well defended against theft, since if you lose them, whoever finds them won't be able to do anything with them.



squash the little men

When I speak of a portrait that will be useful to me, I mean one that I can have in my room, facing my bed, for twenty years without it ever ceasing to live and interest me, without its batteries ever running down, without it ever ceasing to function. Paintings like this are rare. To which one can become attached like a hunter to his dog, a drunkard to his wine. It's not often that you get a painting that works for a long time like that. Often it's not a professional painter who succeeds, it's just as likely to be a random guy once in a while. Maybe one who's trying for the first time, and without going to too much trouble.



OPENING

LOVE INTEREST

I've noticed that for a portrait to be useful to me, what's most important is that it should be full of life, a little life of its own, like a tree, like a little dog. That's what makes a portrait useful, it's not at all that it's stuffed with topographical documentary indications about the specific features of the character in question, his thick or arched eyebrows, his fat chin, his haircut - there's always enough of these indications, and that's not what you should be looking for. If anything, it's preventing the portrait from working, because it clogs up the lines and repeats the field. What's interesting are the paths you can't see the end of, the holes you can't see the bottom of, the smoke you can't see past. It allows the user to take long walks through these portraits, and never the same ones. What I don't like are portraits where you're forced to take the same walk over and over again. I like gardens where you can wander to your heart's content, but I don't like the oval shaped ones that knock me out after two days. I like them to be free with brambles, lots of brambles.

JEAN DUBUFFET



TEAM MEETING