

In a world so intent in categorizing things and beings, in a society that feels safer when everyone keeps to a clearly defined place or role, Sei Arimori opposes his own need for liberty, his will to release man and art from any barrier or reductive labels. But, far from the artists who chose a strong social or political involvement, Sei Arimori prefers to express his ideas in a subtle and discreet manner, to remain on the lookout for the most modest manifestations of the marvellous in the apparent banality of the mundane. His art is before anything else an art of emotion and spirituality, even if based on a solid technical knowledge and on a profound understanding of the universal history of art.

A lover of colours, of the handmade aspect of the pictorial work, Sei Arimori nevertheless avoids being trapped in the sole demonstration of a vain savoir-faire. Like any creator who perfectly masters his tools and technique, he can transcend them, play with them, with audacity but respect, in order to attain a superior level of expressiveness. The processes and accessories of drawing and painting are above all instruments allowing Sei Arimori to render visible the fruits of his thoughts and intuitions. And his art is truly standing at the crossing of two paths, the path of a meditation on the world and on the nature of art, and the path of a more instinctive approach, based on an unfailing capacity of wonderment. The word "instrument" seems even more appropriate here that Sei Arimori considers his painting as a music, as an abstraction born from an harmonious association of separate elements, with a consummate use of pause and silence; for the Japanese artist, creation is perpetually evolving and must speak directly to our senses, everyone being free to understand it and receive it as one wishes.

The art of Sei Arimori therefore acts on a spiritual level. The artist becomes a mediator between the viewer and the rhythms of nature, of which he is a keen observer, always attentive to the slightest breath of the universe. He opens a pan of the veil that hides the deep laws of nature, reveals the relationship that reunite man and earth in an often precarious balance, in a fragile communion forever subjected to an impermanence that makes all the poignancy but also all the beauty of life. An impermanence of which the Japanese have such a deep understanding but which the Westerners often fail to grasp...

An avid traveller, rich of the open-mindedness, of the tolerance and serenity of those who are able to travel the world with the heart and the eyes wide-open, Sei Arimori also brings individuals together, with a language that transcends cultural and linguistic frontiers. Sei Arimori is passionate about any form of artistic creation, whatever its origin, and humbly endeavours to draw out the best of the teachings offered by the great artists that preceded him. From Flemish and Italian artists of the Renaissance (of whom Sei Arimori reminds us the fructuous exchanges, which gave birth to a realistic

representation of the world, even if still at the service of religion) to the Japanese tradition, Sei Arimori studies the characteristics of each school, but also what unites them over time and geography. His synthetic art takes from various sources of inspiration, confirming the common points that we all share in our deeper selves, whatever our nationality. In order to make this universal patrimony intelligible to all, Sei Arimori optes for abstraction, for a pure vibrating and sensitive use of colour, freed from the constraints of figure. Sei Arimori's art lets shadow and light freely express themselves, sublimates space, plays with the reflections of gold, this precious symbol of life and spirituality present in every culture. In so doing, the artist represents the joys and pains that shake the world in a never-ending and always changing flow.

Sei Arimori's paintings have the preciousity of medieval illuminations, of orthodox icons or of Asian Buddhist art. They mix wood, canvas and paper, without discrimination. The artist creates sculptures which are like paintings in volume, while his paintings and paper works take a surprising materiality, breath and rise like waves. The simple and almost imperceptible shift of a golden-leaf border opens a vast field of possibilities, brings movement in the peaceful stability of the work. Sei Arimori draws a line between the flatness of Japanese art and the flatness which also existed in European art before the arrival of Renaissance's perspectivist researches. The artist reaffirms the power of flatness and the self-sufficiency of colour, which is capable to express by itself volume, depth, emotion, coldness, heat...

Sei Arimori perpetuates techniques and materials ignored by many of his contemporaries, like egg tempera, gold-leaves and stone pigments, to which he associates oil and ink, this essential medium of the Far Eastern pictorial tradition. He listened to Jan Van Eyck, this great technician who knew how to jointly use tempera and oil in order to obtain images of the most extraordinary fineness. Sei Arimori reconnects with the inherent slowness of these methods, so little in tune with nowadays obsession for speed. The artist plays with the materials, delightedly but also patiently, in a fastidious stratification of layers of colour, through which beauty can appear and grow, develop in all its plenitude, magnified by light. Because Sei Arimori's art is also, and may be in the first place, a celebration of the intrinsic qualities of light, which the artist applies himself to capture, to superpose in successive layers, invisible to the untrained eye but nevertheless present in all their fullness. Surface after surface of colour and glazing, the artist dedicates himself to a kind of ritual which, once again, plainly allows the time factor to participate in the creative process. Far from Expressionnism, or from the spontaneous art of graffiti, Sei Arimori's painting inscribes itself in duration, in a dialogue with eternity. In a dialogue with other human beings too. Indeed, it is not for

the artist a question of letting explode his own frustrations on the surface, hoping they will find an echo with those of the audience, but rather to remain capable of moving oneself while also be in communion with the others. A solitary artist, Sei Arimori connects himself to the chain of those who make his work possible and useful, from the tools and colour makers to the visitors of his exhibitions, in all generosity and sensibility, in an exchange full of emotion and beauty.

Valérie Douniaux, september 2013