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will not stay still. But this life and this exactness are not the essence of the matter; the point is that Mr Wekwerth and Mr Palitzsch direct them to the right uses.

English directors seem to misunderstand Brecht. Because he is a progressive writer, they assume that the reactionary characters in his plays must be absurd. They make them absurd, and stop at that. They create no sense of power or of conflict. Behind the joke the threat is missing.

In the Berliner Ensemble's "Arturo Ui" the joke is huge. The Charlie Chaplin figure presented by Mr Schall: the bowler hat which his clumsy foot kicks away from him when he tries to pick it up; the Hitler salute which he invents by accident when imitating a ranting provincial actor reciting "Friends, Romans, countrymen": these things are very funny. But

around and impregnating the hugeness of the joke is the reality of the menace. This is the imminent sense of the society which gives to the buffoon Ui his terrible power. All the things that make Ui formidable are outside him: but in this production they are most certainly there. They leap out in the angry, mocking explosions of Hans-Dieter Hosalla's music, or in the shout of the newspaper seller, or in the shot that kills Roma whilst Ui is waving his arm at him in a gesture of imbecile good-fellowship. The statement that Ui is a clown is made by Mr Schall's superb per-

# The painter and perpetual motion

KINETIC a. and n. of, due to, motion.

Is kinetic art any good? "It depends who makes it," is the answer. It is not from lack of initiative that motion plays no part in the great works of the past. The masterpieces of Oriental art are not those in which the head of a seated man can be made to nod back and forth. Leonardo could have invented modes of motion beyond the dreams of any of his successors; but even if he were alive today I doubt if he would think that his whirlwinds would be the better for being plugged in like an electric shaver.

Every great artist has known that the stillness and finality of his images was one of their advantages over Everyday; and if anything could be more ludicrous than the claims lately made for certain forms of kinetic art, it would be the sight of the paltry works in question, and of the broken-backed machinery which alone gives them some semblance of particularity.

A basic test applies in such cases. What does the work look like when the motor is switched off? A Calder mobile, powered by chance breezes, looks well at any time. A Tinguely, powered by electricity, will

ART: BY JOHN RUSSELL

usually express something more than the artist's own ingenuity: the forms may well be large and full, with an interest not confined to the rackets and ex-troverted routines that Tinguely has set up for them.

A Pol Bury is, by contrast, discreet to the point of slyness: each form, as we scrutinise it, is like a rhinoceros with all but the tip of its horn under water. Bryan Wynter, latest in the field (the Tate's purchase is now on view, by the way), sets up his devices so that they look, when not in motion, like a theatre when the curtain is up, the stage is ready for Diaghilev's return to earth, and the orchestra has gone round to the pub at the corner.

There is nothing uniform, that is to say, about the people who can make authentic poetry out of the idea of motion in a work of art. Motion can, of course, be supplied by the observer: the work of art can change as he walks along it. This is done very elegantly by Yaacov Agam in the Marlborough summer show, and it is done on a palatial scale by J. R. Soto in the vibrating wall which was shown in

Amsterdam in June and is now part of the current show at Signals, 39, Wigmore Street. If there is such a thing as an ambulatory art—an art which would turn a corridor, or a pedestrian underpass, into an adventure for the eye—then Soto is one of its masters. Signals has done us all a service by importing a piece which ought, if our museums are on the alert, to stay here.

Signals' show, "Soundings Two," is embellished with small-scale specimens of Gabo, Malevich, Lissitsky, Léger, Moore, Schwitters, Nevelson and others. Some of these are really too skimpy to count, in the context, and the insinuation that they in some way legitimise the work of Signals' own protégés is quite unwarranted. But an unprejudiced search will reveal work of real quality by Camargo, Debourg, Goeritz and others, and it is undoubtedly an enrichment of London's art-life to have somewhere where the compass-needle swings not towards Paris, or New York, or (the newest thing) Los Angeles, but towards Mexico and Venezuela and Brazil.

Among the season's exhibitions in Europe, the "Age of Charlemagne" in Aachen and the brothers Guardi in Venice have already been reviewed here. The "French Paintings

from Moscow and Leningrad" would draw the town in any capital city: at the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Bordeaux they must rank as the scoop of the century. I shall deal in detail with the show when it opens at the Louvre in October, but I owe it to readers to say, meanwhile, that it includes not only masterpieces by Cézanne, van Gogh, Matisse and Picasso, but a discriminating choice among the hundreds of paintings from earlier periods which were acquired by Catherine the Great and others. The Louis le Nain "Visite à la Grande-Mère" is one of the great European paintings of all time—how the Louvre must envy it!—and among the pictures which have not been seen in France since the 1770s Watteau's "Délassements de la Guerre" would in itself repay the journey to Bordeaux.

Back in London, the exhibitions of Derek Southall (Rowan), Michael Buhler and Albert Irvin (New Art Centre), and Bernard Carter (Portal Gallery) deserve more than this passing word. Visitors who are in search of something by which to remember England could do much worse, in particular, than snap up one of Mr Carter's "paintings of English waterways."