

Green, as I love you, greenly

Concept

It seems that in the age of telecommunications, digital technologies and (micro) biological science art should necessarily reflect this situation and cultural environment. However, all this is characteristic for the rich and therefore western world, thus it could not be universal. Nevertheless, in this society also the belief in traditional mediums like painting is still strong. Because of an apparent necessity that art must include technologies and has to be engaged in social questions, there is a huge production of works of art – or better art actions – that are more or less momentary actual. Majority of the contemporary art is bringing the spectator a simple message. Therefore such concepts often function as flashes of wits. On the contrary investigations in painting mainly tend toward standing actuality; they are trying to find deeper meaning and are frequently more complex. It is obvious that painting is a medium, which enables to express both, simple message as also abstract truth, from which the latter gives this medium a specific power in which also a generation of younger artists surely believe. Painting gives something that we have not been able to express with other mediums of expression. It still informs us and offers “new”. It attracts and seduces us.

The selected Slovenian painters of the younger generation for the project “Green, as I love you, greenly” are all seduced into this unexplainable obsessed “love” relationship with painting. They want to paint, to hold the brush, touch the colors and canvas. They do not abandon painting, they persist on it, knead it; they entice music out of it. And in this relation they are sincere and meditative, in an endless oscillation between searched and found. What gives this “symphonies” the value is the fact they declare that “searched something”, from which authors can not and do not want to escape.

Ground origin for the concept of the project is the love relationship, in which there is no room for social engagement, rational conceptualization or theories, statements and systems. There is no coincidence that in this love to painting the subject matter is intentionally or not turning to nature and natural as to the opposite of social; as the basis of natural are forces that function within it, and which function also in the painter as well as in the spectator.

Guidance for the selection of artists was therefore not to find those who depict motives of nature, although images of nature inevitably appear on some paintings. The

purpose of the project is also not to raise a hard concept, which the singular paintings would only illustrate. The artists present cycles of paintings that as rounded units co-construct a whole.

One of the basic significances of painting is its interweaving of perception and imagination. We perceive something that is present, but we imagine what is not. There could be a hint of the absent in the present or we could find it in our memories. The hint launches the imagination. The past experiences ally themselves with present ones. The imagination could be intentional or not. In Latin *imaginatio* or *imago* means image, picture. In artistic praxis imagination means forming ideas that are not directly accessible to perception. Artistic imagination should be an ability of mind to reproduce images and notions, which are stored in memory under a suggestion of associated images and a combination of former experiences into creating new images. The painting is present through a dynamics of present and absent. There is a sense experience caused by some present colors, forms, compositions, materiality of painting that leads to perception and feelings. Perception is necessarily bound up with happenings, experiences, conceptions, memories and knowledge that are evoked with present sense irritations.

The paintings of Simona Biličič definitely play this game between perception and imagination. We could say that this is valid so for her creative intentions as for the spectator's perception/reception. The eye is travelling through images of nature, which are becoming surfaces of colours, compositions of rhythms and patterns. What is first? Nature or abstract imagination; macro photographic images of landscape or micro structures of its platforms? There is something as natural origins – for the principles of structures (of landscapes, structures of water, ice, earth; as also for construction of painting itself, its forms, compositions, the relation of depth and surface). There is a tight connection between the natural structures and the structures of imagination. The black and white (or grey) paintings of Gašper Jemec are paint not to intentionally evoke images of nature – landscapes and natural phenomena, but they do. In his paintings there is a decantation of substance. We perceive and recognize – there is a painting with the alluviums of color substances, the traces of its flowing through the landscape of painting, the sediments of the painting medium, the stony parts on the surface of the endless painting desert and the white/fog that blows through it. The painting reveals the laws of nature – the genuine nature as well as the nature of painting – a painting becomes a nature in itself.

Considering this way, the nature in painting is not in the least necessarily the representation of a concrete motive from nature, but rather the image of natural forces and

states. There could be an uncontrolled move of the painter's hand that occurs repeatedly, a gesture that unintentionally evokes horizons or opens spaces from behind spaces. A surface of paint covers and simultaneously testifies that something is behind it, a space opens behind the vertical three in front of us, but is immediately closed by another three as it also reveals that something is also behind it. There is always something behind, it never ends. The paintings of Matjaž Arrol open and close the horizontal and vertical spaces of painting.

If the nature in Arrol's paintings is more abstract, it follows more the invisible rules of it than representations, the works of Anja Jerčič seem to do right the opposite. There are great magnificent orchids, standing in front of us. The "faces" of them face us with a hardly tolerable measure of nobility. Something that has a glory of beauty becomes a sign of a bold self-sufficiency. The flowers in Jerčič's paintings rather have complex symbolic meanings.

We could think that recognizable or indicated representations on the paintings of Martina Bohar could also have a deeper symbolic meaning. The rats, **mice**, watermelons and other animals or plants, as also natural phenomena are in culture complexly loaded with some meanings. Bohar's paintings rather express irony to these cultural contents. They both: face us with them and show us prejudices that originate from them, as also try to render back the natural status of these elements.

The water, the dark surface of it, or the transparent present depth of it on the paintings of Matej Košir is depicted consistent representative. But what is obvious immediately is that in the foreground of these works of art there is not a naked image of the depicted motive. The paintings immediately pull the perception to the dimness. They conjure up rapture in the observer. The observed image insinuates into memory. It interweaves into it as it has been there from always. The feeling is sad as we are in the process of interring, but also very propitiate. The water is flooding the landscape of memory.

And to conclude the presentation of selected artists, Arjan **Pregl's** works do not express the dark side of imagination. They could be seen as vivid presentations of happiness. We could again see some depicted natural environments in them, but they are more a starting point of a totally different story; the one that I began with – the story of new media, computers. The signs that appear in Pregl's paintings origin from the computer programs for digital graphics. But they are images, developed from natural elements, a kind of "empty signs" (signs with minimum of content), with which the user could fill up the graphic surface of the digital file. Pregl depict them to full the oil painting on canvas, which is through all the mediation becoming an image of a kind of nature again, although the nature here is becoming a really complex notion, which is actually also the least natural in the very basis. The cycle of

Pregl's paintings presented within the project "Green, as I love you, greenly" still contain much of the unsupervised agitation of the artist's expression.

The notion of green is presented in many different ways – it could be color, symbol of nature or something else. Also the love relation to this »green« is not narrowly defined. Yet a feeling is uncontrollable. It tends somewhere; a natural force is behind it. It is also concretely a feeling of longing for something. There is an irritation of sense, what forms perception, and we find a hint somewhere in the present irritation that evokes associated images, past experiences, conceptions, memories, what forms a complex new entity. Artist yearns to depict that, but there are also we, of course – the spectators. The present paintings irritate us to recall some concepts from our memory, but they will also be jointed with some information into new knowledge and experiences. Partly we bring the »green« and the love to it within us partly we come to know them from the paintings. Let yourself be seduced into "love" relationship with the exhibited paintings.

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