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INTERVIEW WITH THE ARTIST

Olga Badalíková

O. B.: After the long period in which the intertwined structures, being accompanied with illuminating elements, prevailed in your prints and, recently the faces that were found in the texture of ply-wood, you are showing the series of linocuts that produce an impression of being a sort of imaginary still-lives. Where does this new theme originate in the context of your work?

O. M. : The first prints of this series became parallel with other works, such as *The Rest* or *The Foundlings* in which I was interested in possible return of the things existing in the objective world into my images. In this case there are "stories" from the life of vessels, cups, bowls and some not exactly defined, unknown or, on the contrary, well known rituals. The vessels have for me a secret, they can be an eloquent witness and rich symbol, however, I do not use them as requisites in the still-lives. I am more interested in their substance.

O. B. : It is light which has often been playing the key role in your prints. How do you manage to get it emanating from the spaces of your prints?

O. M. : The possibility to involve light in my prints had occurred in the moment when I began – almost twenty years ago – using overprints made with white color on black surface. The first overprint gives a quite fade blue-gray tone, however, when you add further layers of white, you sometimes succeed to „walling” the light into these superimpositions. Thus the light is not coming from vacant places on the paper but from the area with multiplied overprints.

O. B. : Despite the fact that you work on the basis of various themes, your prints have something in common, something I called for my self "blue-gray somnambulism". I would like to know up to what degree is this common feature related the used printing technique and how this characteristics is based on some of your fixed point of departure or lasting feeling?

O. M. : That is apparently the matter of personal development and direction. Although the print technique can function as an entirely neutral medium, it is also a source of inspiration. The image is created through the technique but also transformed. And the printmakers actively change and personalize the techniques according to their individual visions. As far as the point of departure is concerned, when a new space is being opened in front of me, thanks to some new idea, I have to feel that it draws me into it because there is enough mystery. I prefer the movement in a small space until all its potential are "wrung". And then, I find the next space mostly towards the place where I can take, physically, my following step, although I can see further or else where. I do not force the idea to be realized. It itself has to ask for it. And that is how the image and the mode of its reproduction can pervade each other and melt into one issue.

O. B. : The main future of contemporary art, however, is not often the focus on a small space but rather mutual permeability of means of expression, their modification, different transversal movements... What are the reactions of printmaking as a medium to these stimuli?

O. M. : I think that printmaking replies to them in the same ways as do the other media. It also recycles what there has already been before, it also appropriates alternative possibilities, expands in many ways but, sometimes it seems to me, that it bears not so well the omnipresent dictate of "novelty" since it must use the more or less stabilized print procedures if it wants to remain printmaking.

O. B. : What has changed the most, according to your view from inside, in Czech visual arts during these last years?

O. M. : I think that the big change concerns the circumstances of managing arts. As if it has become generalized the idea that contemporary art is a stone building that must be conquered by a spectacular attack,

because otherwise the artist can hardly assert him or herself. But it seems to me that today, the visual arts are a rather light temporary refuge into which it is actually impossible to break in. And it can even happen, – this being almost certain – that on the next walk, this longed-for bower will look completely different and, if we would find it at all, it will not even be in the same place.