

Vladimír Franz

**Large Format; Valtice castle 7th July-14th July;
the small horse riding hall in the Valtice castle 14th July-9th September;
Bzenec castle 23rd September-14th October 2005**

The south Moravian town of Valtice held the tenth run of the International painting symposium Large Format and there were 3 Austrian and 8 Czech artists participating.

The original idea to organize the symposium goes back to the beginning of 90s and its "spiritual fathers" were Mr. Jaroslav Pelikán, an art theorist and Mr. Jan Pospíšil, a painter. The statute of the symposium is quite free when it comes either to the topic or techniques and thus we can see a creative approach of various artists dealing with large format pictures, various solutions of how to approach monumental tasks, a space, an illusion, time, a conventionalization, a compactness of the picture, a personal input, a decorativeness, a possible servitude of the picture or an influence on the place itself.

This year has offered an opportunity of a friendly meeting where artists had a chance to compare their art work.

While the Austrian artist Moje Menhardt was kind of getting to know the basic tasks of the art craft and aimed at a non space decorativeness, her colleagues Eva Hradilová and Stefan Emmelmann relied on spiritual means, Emmelmann using the well tried light vibrations, Hradilová, using the same approach, enriched it with unstable drawings. But it seems that a large format of pictures did not enhance the intimate atmosphere of their work.

Mariana Látalová was testing calligraphy and a placement of the coloured space - an interaction, where the space results from its accuracy.

Markéta Lesáková started with simple elements - colour stripes - which she used to give a message about our world.

Kamil Mikel uses a similar approach, but in his case it shows a more homogenous views and opinions, by means of a thought and a physical gesture he creates an urgent testimony about the world.

Zdeněk Tománek, a sculptor, gets inspired by the Czech post-baroque tradition of the 20th century. The surface of his sculpture pieces is richly folded, which atomizes and turns his works into a playful informel form. The artist deals with questions such as where to find a bordering line between the end of graphics and the beginning of a painting.

Mikoláš Axman tries to solve a similar question. A huge graphic print "Parents" where (by means of a joint print of two halves), solid and mobile pigments interact and happen to form a sophisticated monotype, where pieces of shapes flow in a transparent space expressing the painter's complicated approach to the world which is not unambiguous. Axmann is aware of the central power of this approach and that is why he decides for a picture form to make the composition more stable. In case of his picture "Buzzard", he applies a more traditional approach, which he made use of with his first cycle "Wine".

The composition of the picture "Cat toy" by Daniel Bednář represents a paraphrase on some famous art pieces from history, like Venus by Tizian or Olympia by Manet. The difference between the lying nude and the man working on a computer results in an irony stressed by the conflict between reality and

its virtual reflection. The black hues of the mature picture are named and activated just like in the late pictures by G. Braque by means of various dim lights of different colours showing as if from behind the picture. Besides the classical painting, the painter makes use of a reevaluated graffiti.

I have participated in the symposium several times. My picture "Madonna with Ants" represents a continuation of my socially critical "Valtice" cycle. My goal is to be less expressive. I am aiming at some kind of a baroque ironic matter-of-factness. At the outline of an "altar" painting, there are dissolving things like sacral motifs - a topic of Assumption completed with cult minor figures of our time - with a comics colouring and merry-go-round lights. The point is to show a conflict between the grandeur and the decay, to express the identity crisis of today's civilization. The canvas is painted with a light brush, "al fresco", the composition is not tied and atomized into firm boundaries. My aim was to open the space of the picture towards the space of the horse riding hall. In the picture "A Death of a Hare" I tended to reach an express reportage to pay tribute to the fullness of life in the south Moravia region.

Jan Pospíšil is a true dramatist. As an every year participant he has created typical variants of impressions about a human existence, defined as a game where the main characters are bad luck/unhappiness, good luck/happiness and a human being. This year he has created two dynamic compositions: "Genetics I" and "Genetics II". While in the first picture he is just touching the topic, the second picture puts the question more clearly: he searches the origin of life, he looks for wisdom and fortuity. His dynamic message is based on the compositional principles of baroque art where colour and drawing create a monumental polyphony.

In the course of the ten runs of the symposium (1992-1996, 2001-2005), more than 100 pictures have been done in Valtice. It is definitely worth trying to exhibit a selection of this collection to public, as so far the art works have only been shown at the end of each symposium and for a very short period of time.

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