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Theodoulos, "Système Global" 1996 video installation

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Sanat ve Görsel Kültür Dergisi
Volume/Sayı:3-Autumn/Sonbahar/2022
[Trimestral / Üç ayda bir çıkar]



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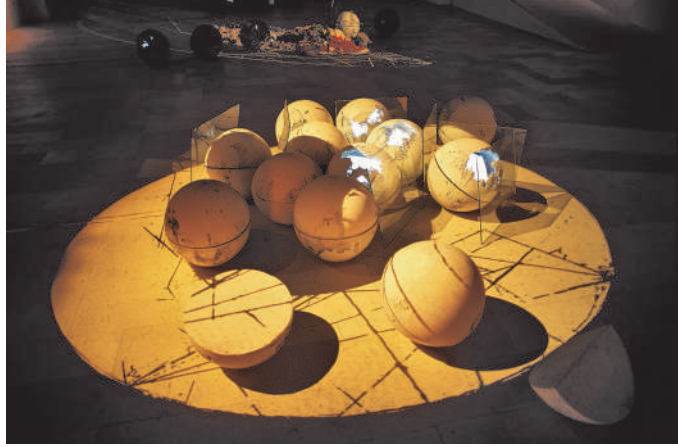
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Theodoulos, "Système Global" 1996 video installation

Theodoulos: "The artist who thinks like an architect and feels like a poet"
Androula Michael 5

Renzogallo: Inside and Beyond Painting and Sculpture
Aldo Iori 14

Reflexive Art
Ali Akay 25

Lightness Is the Rhythm of Vanishing The Abstraction of Elio Cassarà
Tommaso Evangelista 35

Murmur of the Landscape
Jorge Antonio Fernández Torres 43

On Architecture and Art with Nevzat Sayın
İsmet Değirmenci 53

Nuovo è Antico
Bruno Corà 74

More or Less
Emre Zeytinoglu 81

Cypriot Visual Artists Design for the Stage
Nadia Anaxagorou 91

Visual Acts
Maria Bargilly 93

**Costas and Rita Severis Foundation /
The Centre of Visual Arts and Research**
Rita Severis 103

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ARS AXIS

Art for a Better World / Daha iyi bir dünya için.

Presentation

We are in front of the readers again with the third issue of Ars Axis. In the presentation text of our second issue, we said, “the ontological relationship between the artist and the work, the authoritarian relationship between the artist and art institutions, and the anthropological relationship between art and society are relations that need to be re-evaluated through a new understanding of civilization”. While the transitional space between art and visual culture expands with many disciplines, the autonomy position of the artist is narrowing. While we have to face such a reality, with what kind of consciousness the artist can contribute to intellectual production it is an important question before us. Our journal aims to publish with an understanding that does not care about the “market” and considers originality and competence rather than popularity. The fact that my artist personality and my understanding of the publisher correspond to each other in a way that confirms each other is a situation that I pay attention. For this reason, Ars Axis, prepared with the vol-

Sunuş

Ars Axis’in üçüncü sayısı ile yeniden okurların karşısındayız. “Sanatçı ve yapıt arasındaki ontolojik ilişki, sanatçı ve sanat kurumları arasındaki otoriter ilişki ve sanat ve toplum arasındaki antropolojik ilişki artık yeni bir medeniyet anlayışı üzerinden yeniden değerlendirilmesi gereken ilişkilerdir” demiştik ikinci sayımızın sunuş metninde. Sanat ve görsel kültür arasındaki geçişken alan birçok disiplinle daha da genişlerken sanatçının özerklik konumu da daralıyor. Böyle bir gerçeklikle yüzleşmek durumundayken sanatçının ne tür bir bilinçle entelektüel üretime katkı koyabileceği de önemli bir sorunsal olarak önümüzde duruyor. Derгимiz “piyasa” kaygısı taşımayan, popülerlik yerine özgünlük ve yetkinlik niteliklerini gözetten bir anlayışla yayın yapmayı hedefliyor. Sanatçı kişiliğim ve yayıncı anlayışımın birbirini doğrulayıcı şekilde karşılık bulması özen gösterdiğim bir durumdur. Bu nedenledir ki çalışma arkadaşlarımla gönüllü katkılarıyla hazırlanan Ars Axis sadece bir sanat dergisi değil kolektif bir duruş örneğinin göstergesidir de. Yine önceki sayılarda olduğu gibi

untary contributions of my colleagues, is not only an art magazine but also an example of a collective stance. Again, as in the previous issues, we meet with the works and texts of artists and art critics from different countries. We announce that we have opened our pages for corporate promotion, starting with this issue, which consists of artist work readings, collective exhibitions, interviews and institutional structure introductions...

değişik ülkelerden sanatçı ve sanat eleştir-
menlerinin eser ve metinleriyle buluşuyoruz.
Sanatçı yapıtı okumaları, kolektif sergiler,
söyleşi ve kurumsal yapı tanıtımı niteliğin-
deki metinlerden oluşan bu sayımızdan
başlayarak kurumsal tanıtıma da sayfaları-
mızı açtığımızı duyururuz...

Ümit İnatçı
Editor – in Chief / Genel Yayın Yönetmeni

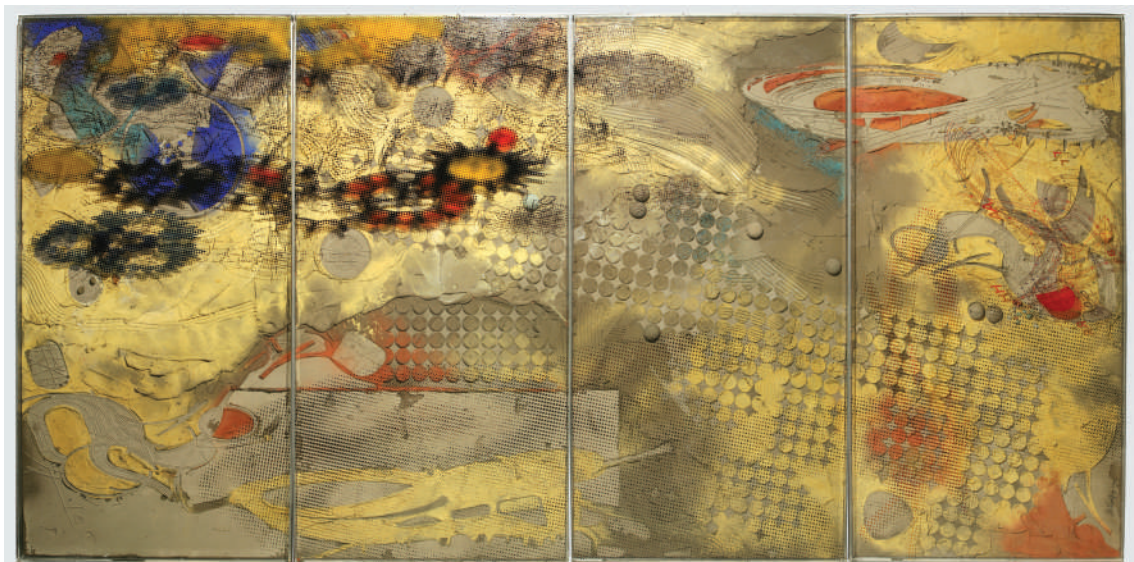
THEODOULOS :

“THE ARTIST WHO THINKS LIKE AN ARCHITECT AND FEELS LIKE A POET”

Androula Michael

“Cells” is the title Theodoulos has chosen for his work made for the Louvre, as it exactly defines the heart of the matter, which rules his entire work. The cell, working as a symbol in his mind, crystallizes and underlies his work and justifying it calls for a new way of understanding Aristotles’ Physics where by : “matter carries in itself the origin of movement and of change, but takes

shape and builds up as a picture through the mind”. In his “video sculptures” and his “expanded paintings”, Theodoulos conjugates diachronic, archetypal forms, such as spheres, cones, cubes, in various cellular combinations on which projected pictures come to life by slides and video pictures that, by definition, pertain to the world of immateriality, which for him is equivalent to the immateriality of



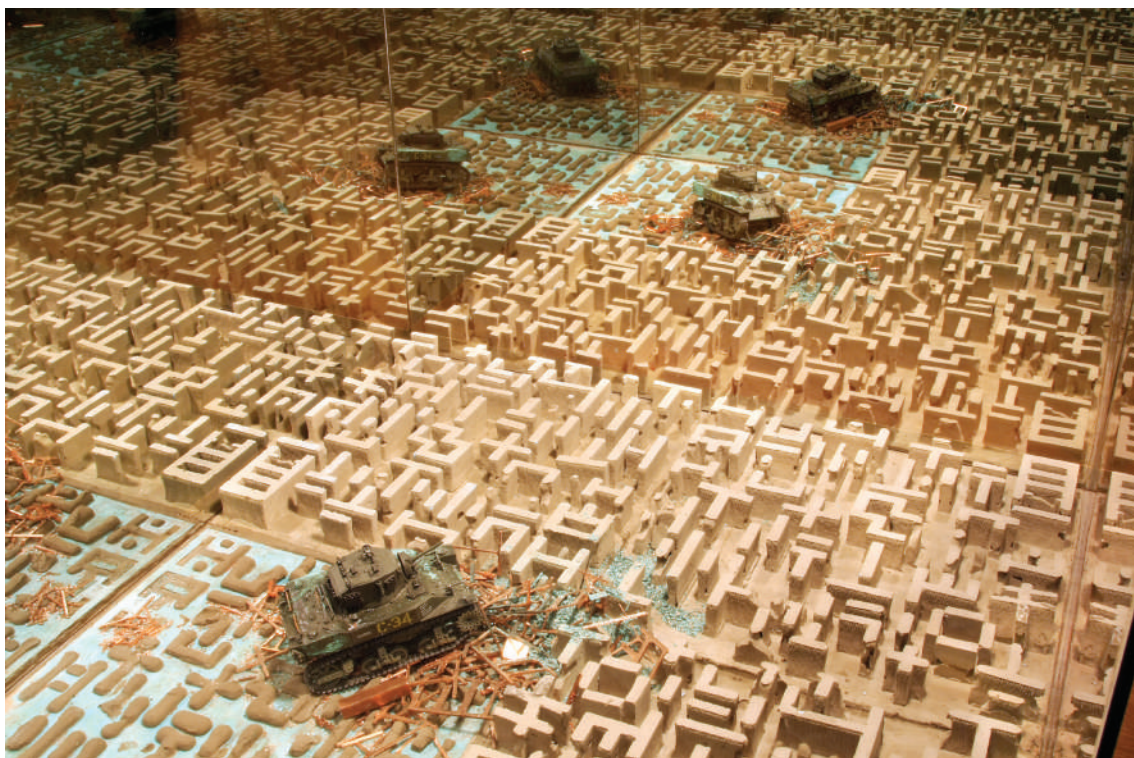
“CELLS - Choirokitia “ 2009 / 444x222x12 cm. / cement, minerals / Patrimonial collection UNESCO Paris - Photo: Ch. Panayides

THEODOULOS: “The artist who thinks like an architect and feels like a poet”

the thought. This kind of work finds its achievement in the installations he created for the Biennale of Venice in 1990 (Aperto) and in 1997. The video incorporated into the spheres made of metal or of cement, transform the materiality of the sculpture that becomes a hybrid form which, oscillating between matter and non-matter. His works make forms and temporalities echo among themselves in his quest for balance while tending to reconcile contraries. He also toys with the difference produced among various materials, as in: the cement cubes and the waves of the sea or waves of fire, the cone of cement in the earth,

which emits luminous signals. As a creator, Theodoulos tests the efficiency of his hybrid blends. His entire work can be viewed as under the sign of transformation, as the passage of one state to another, as the result of magical power that charges the chosen material with a poetical aura. Yiannis Toumazis used the term of alchemy to speak of the work made on the archetypal raw materials (fire, air, earth) and their association to more contemporary ways pertaining to mental activities, which mediate in the process of transformation of matter⁽¹⁾.

This alchemy also interferes in speech,



Solo exhibition Musée du Louvre Paris 2008-9 “CELLS II - Engomi” Photo: Ch. Panayides

in language. The appearance of Cypriote proto-syllabic scripture signs, inscribed on a terra cotta small plate in Engomi, on his earlier works, rendered by luminous signs, and made by the use of cathod screens, progressively takes the shape of “a free electronic analysis”, to be transformed yet into a picture. Naturally, Theodoulos makes no use of a strictly scientific method but rather uses an empirical and intuitive approach. The picture obtained gets amazingly closer to the structural rhythm of the creation of the ancient city, as it can be observed on an aerial photography of Engomi. Ten thousand years after Khirokitia, the cell

becomes, once more, the basic module in the creation but it exists as well, as an electronic field, which, in turn, translates visible reality by means of a simple code. The metamorphosis of the cellular unit moving from the structure of the inscribed alphabet to the urban topography and electronic language, come to form “temporality strata” which the artist uses freely in his works “Cells I” and “Cells II”. Transforming / transcribing this electronic language – picture of the contemporary world – testifies to his will: having ancient heritage, remote in time, made into terms and vocabulary of our time and attempts to find the sim-



Solo exhibition Musée du Louvre Paris 2008-9 “CELLS I - Chirokitia” (cellules I) détail, cement vidéo minerals, Photo: Ch. Panayides

THEODOULOS: “The artist who thinks like an architect and feels like a poet”

ilarities or rather to seek the link which ties the past to the present.

The archaeological sites - of cellular structure of Khirokitia, of the Neolithic period, with its circular plan to the site of Engomi, of the late Chalcolithic period, of orthogonal plan - seem to fascinate him as they answer, by their organization, to the archetypal forms he has developed in works such as “Cells”. The extremely reduced means by which he renders everything serving an infinite number of possibilities is indeed the core of the matter in Theodoulos’ creative activity where he uses minimal forms in his sculptures associated with natural materials, such as : earth, ochre, iron or copper oxides which he always finds near a copper mine where he spent his childhood. This copper mine in activity since the Antiquity marked him significantly. Such an image obviously was not that much indifferent to the artist

who, still unaware, experimented what is known now as land art, of a colossal and natural earthwork. To his eyes, this was not really art but had to do with new artistic fields, which he experimented later on. When asked: what his relation to land art is –as one may see in it a certain similarity with land art works like in Michel Heizer in his “Double Negative” of which he speaks with respect and appreciation– to add immediately though that what counted for him was the traces of his own life experience of the landscape left upon his unconscious. He adds that he believes there is a clear and major difference between the information one receives and the experience directly felt in life.

When he heard of land art, as an artist, he was confronted with his own intuitions, which this art enabled him to verify, but his very own route lay elsewhere as he does not share the same problematic and experiments land art artists have. He then talks about the enormous hole in the earth, the copper mine with its depth, its color continuously changing and its inscription in the landscape, “his land art”, as he likes putting it, which follows him as a strong image in all his work. He evokes the marvel but also the fear facing this natural sight, the feeling of time awareness and the way it is printed in this sculptural land-



“Système Global” 1996 video inst. Photo: Ch. Panayides

scape. This is how Theodoulos gains concrete experience of time continuity from a specific place. He stood facing this copper mine, standing in front of something which oscillated, to and fro between what was natural and what was artificial, between landscape and human interference. This explains the big size of his works, works dug into the earth, all work effected on the volume in negative, in void. With Cupola-matrix made in Nicosia in 1983 (fig. 1), he plunges back to “the maternal cavity of the earth”. Efi Strouza the commissioner of this project, which she has support-

ed with eagerness, stresses the “natural” and “structural” character of these works in direct relation to the earth and the mine in Mitsero. “The walls of this cavity are erected according to the traditional structure of the dwelling made of stones, but at a certain point of the wall the structure reacts and gives way to the inscription of some organic element like a human figure emerging from the Earth breaking its stone structure and spreading itself on the ground”(2). The inversed cone in the earth made in Delphi in 1992, is also part of his works directly linked to the strong experience



“Système Global” 1996 video installation, Venice Biennale 1997 / NIMAC 1996, Photo by Ch. Panayides

THEODOULOS: “The artist who thinks like an architect and feels like a poet”

yielded from this site. The source of his work the void, volume in negative, is this place and it provides him with the materials he has always used: earth, stones, iron and copper oxide...

Environment, which is the mark of the place printed on the unconscious, according to Theodoulos, affects our way of thinking and this emerges spontaneously during creation. “Landscape, unconsciously, evokes a rhythm in us”, says the artist. Cupola and spheres evoke this undulating rhythm, no doubt, of the land-

scape which stretched under his eyes and which he recorded, having to reproduce it later impulsively. Theodoulos is obviously very sensitive to real space, which he sees as metaphor of our own inner landscapes, but he is also very concerned about space in which his works are set. He does not consider space as an empty frame but sees it as a dynamic element interacting with the work in order to create environment. Theodoulos behaves with space and with elements as a commander of shapes; always adopting an “architectural behavior”, organizing space and shapes, toying with the site he sets forward.

The use of steady and non-temporal shapes, melt into cement, along with organic materials, stones, minerals and earth, presented in several piles, totally fleeing away from form, might give us the impression of an archaeological excavation in process and might lead us to ponder on the topic of ruins... Philippe Dagen, in his brief report he made, of an exhibition very important to the artist, an exhibition organised by Alain Mousseign in Toulouse(3), rightfully, spoke of “Greek contemporary ruins”. There is indeed such a dimension to be found in the artist’s work. It is about rewinding time, not with the nostalgic intention to live it again as a past and bygone ideal, but with the ambition of “re-inventing” and re-linking it to the

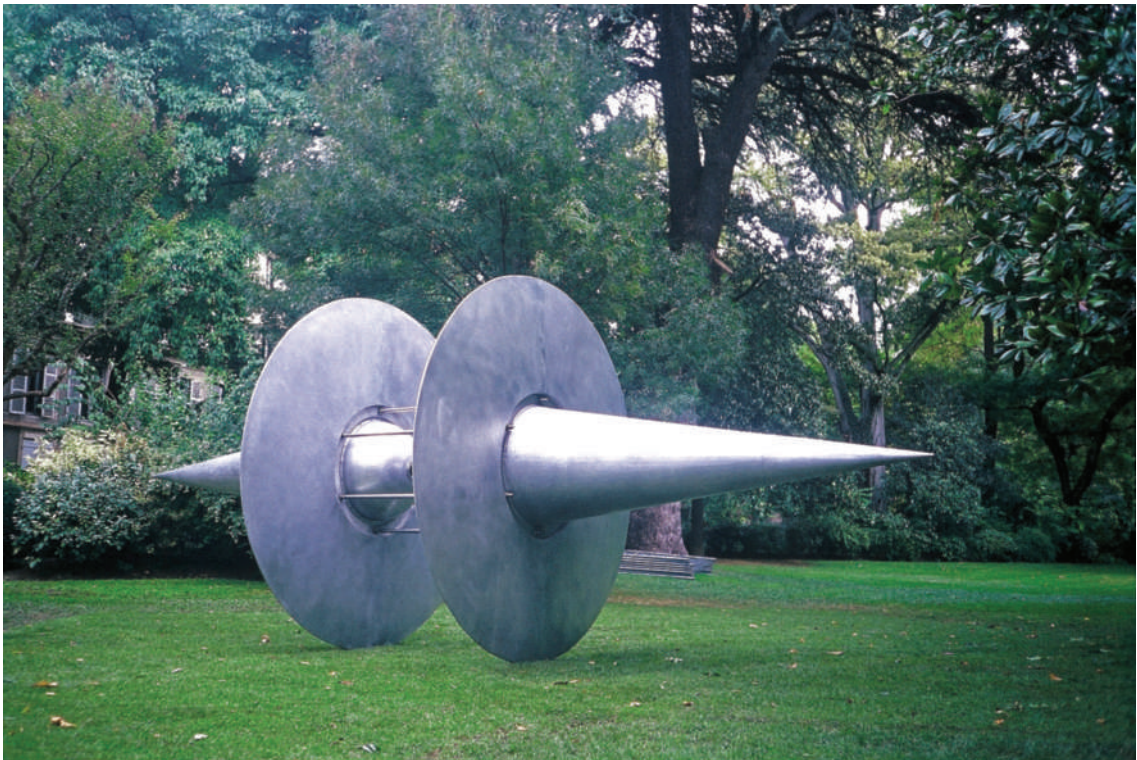


“Between Earth and Sky” 2010
Larnaca International Airport Sculpture (h 16.65 cm / metal)

present, revealing thus the perennial form in shapes through time and space. Theodoulos goes well beyond the formal resemblance as his dialogue with the past is engaged at a higher level.

His works created for the Louvre evoke this dialogue in a compact way and it is also recalled in the very adaptation of the project to the specific space of the museum and more particularly to the hall where the works are exhibited. The artist, taking into account the reality of the given space and the archaeological objects exhibited, goes as far as to include the existing showcases display-

ing antiques in his own works. These are made of a pedestal, a surface of cement made of various forms, as well as a cube of transparent mirror. The latter, might give the impression of being used as a showcase, but it is only a “shell”, or sheath that is part of the work itself. The pure geometric form of transparent mirror has the capacity of multiplying the image from the inside to the infinite. This spatial infinite is not without functioning as temporal infinite, which would go far back in time to rally the time of the antiques with which Theodoulos seems to have started a dialogue. He made a dream he had for a very long time come



Parc Royal, Toulouse (metal sculpture) 2001

true: it was to help rallying two temporalities, one as remote as Antiquity and the other, today our present time, in the same unifying place.

Multiplying the image to the infinite is already experimented by the artist in one of his significant works, *A Roof for Homo sapiens*: an enormous transparent cube and inside a “floor” made of minerals on which flares a projected video image in movement – the one of a naked swimmer, “his poet”, as he calls him, who is revolving around himself. Space is locked yet, multiplied to the infinite. The image in movement brings life to this otherwise inanimate space which combines once more the perfect archetypal shape, say the shape of the cube and the shapeless space it is enclosed by. Here, one might reflect on some words his professor, in the *Ecole des Beaux-Arts*, said about him more than twenty-five years ago: “He thinks like an architect and feels like a poet”. His work, under the appearance of pure minimalism, might keep a secret content. The architectural dimension, the almost monumental dimension of this cube is not without concealing the poetic fragility of the swimmer confined in its interior. It is free movement indeed yet also confinement, it is purity of the line yet disorder on the ground. Is it not a metaphor of this non-defined magma that each of us carries within the heart of hearts? In

this sense, Theodoulos’s cube, despite of the minimalist feature of its shape, will never qualify as a minimal work, just like Tony Smith’s *Die*, for instance. Whereas the shape carried in minimalism is cool, in Theodoulos’ work, it is always clad in a more spiritual dimension, this psychological content Minimalists endeavored to remove from their works. Unfortunately, the Cells of the Museum of the Louvre are deprived of image in movement, the immaterial projections, companions to almost all his works from *Autophoto-Etrophoto* up to *Système Global* and *Système Urbain*. Theodoulos compensates this constraint, linked to the specific space of his installation, and he creates, through the multiplication of the image, the movement which conscience sets in motion... These works betray the “architectural behavior” Theodoulos maintains with things and places. His simplified architectural structures have the sober and denuded character these ancient cities like Khirokitia and Engomi display. In this experimental work Theodoulos tries to link the past to the present in a vivid manner; attempting to relate the trace or the print of the human thought in relation to everyday life.

- 1) Yiannis Toumazis, exhibition catalogue, Theodoulos, The Nicosia Municipal Arts Centre, 1996.
- 2) Efi Strouza, «Introduction au parcours de Théodoulos», exhibition catalogue, Théodoulos

Grégoriou, *Système Global*, 26 June – 13 September 1992, Midi-Pyrénées Centre of Contemporary Art, p. 55.

3) Philippe Dagen, «L'Été festival Labège Ruines grecques modernes Béton, terre et téléviseurs: étrange alchimie Gregoriou Théodoulos à Labège-Innopole», in the newspaper *Le Monde*, 28 July 1992.

*Text of the catalog by Dr. Androula Michael
Art Historian, University of Picardie Jules Verne
(Co-Curator of Theodoulos exhibition in Louvre Museum – Paris,
December 2008- September 2009)



“Autophota-Heterophota” 1992 CRAC Midi - Pyrénées, Toulouse (cement, 2 TV monitors, inox, color)



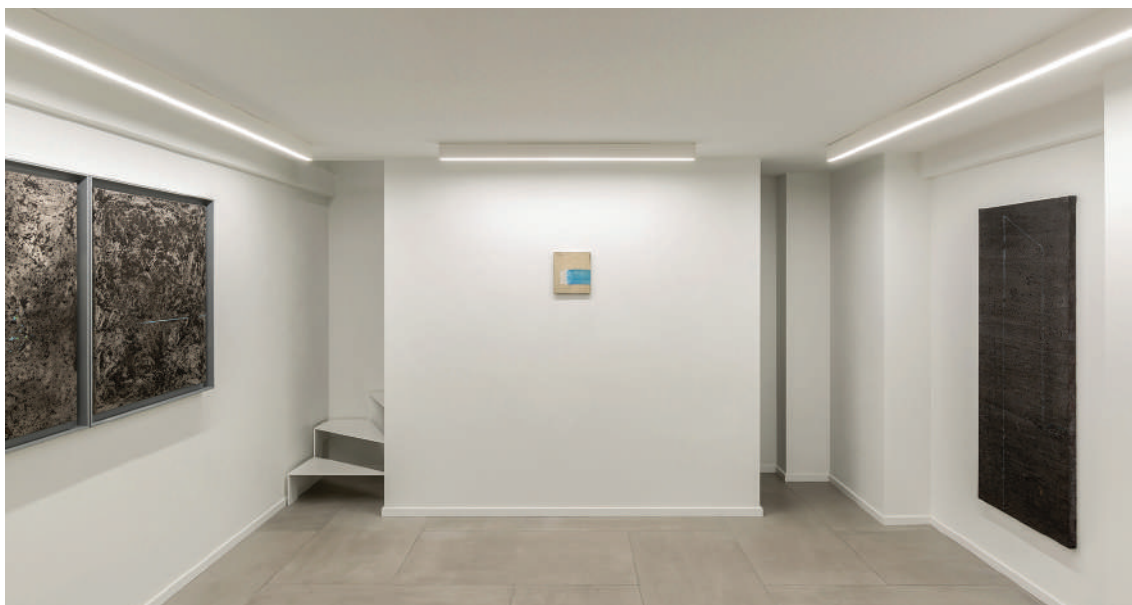
RENZOGALLO: INSIDE AND BEYOND PAINTING AND SCULPTURE

RENZOGALLO: DENTRO E OLTRE LA PITTURA E LA SCULTURA

Aldo Iori

In a well-known letter to Benedetto Varchi, Michelangelo makes the claim that painting and sculpture are one and the same thing, going on to define sculpture as an act of taking away and painting as an act of adding on¹. In Renzogallo it is difficult to separate his vocation towards one discipline or the other. He may be understood as a painter, since his works are often constructed according to a process of addition, such as when

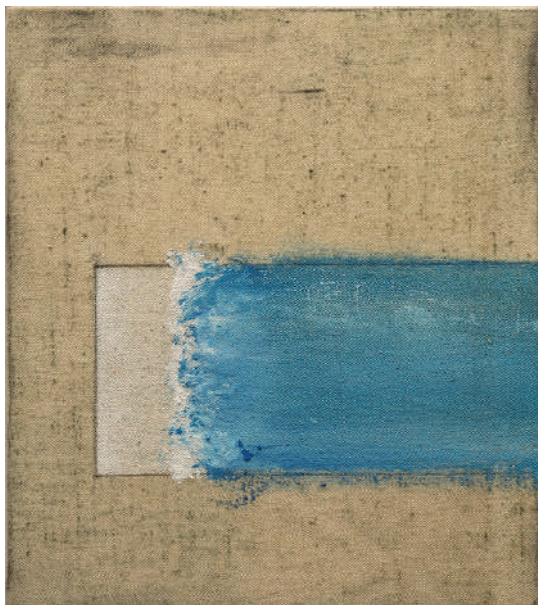
Nella nota lettera a Benedetto Varchi, Michelangelo afferma che la pittura e la scultura sono una medesima cosa, definendo poi la scultura come atto del levare e la pittura come atto del porre¹. In Renzogallo risulta difficile scindere la sua vocazione verso l'una o l'altra disciplina. Potrebbe essere inteso come pittore in quanto le sue opere sono spesso costruite secondo il procedimento dell'addizione, come quando sulla tela



Divario (Art Space)-Rome, view from exhibition

he adds pigments to the canvas or combines materials with each other by tone and by chromatic sensibility. Observing other markedly three-dimensional works, placed in exhibition spaces or outdoors and in which he gives importance to the structure rather than to the mass, he may be understood as a sculptor: indeed these works are the result of a process of composition and at the same time of intense reduction. The artist often emphasizes a desire to eliminate all that is superfluous in order to reveal the essence of the work which only requires few elements to appear. A continuous taking away of strong conceptual value that balances out a material and operational adding on.

This substantial permeability and osmo-



Nami [Japanese for wave], 2021, graphite, pigments and acrylic on canvas, on wood, 25,5x22,5 cm.

aggiunge pigmenti o accosta materiali gli uni agli altri per tonalità e per sensibilità cromatica. Osservandone altre fortemente tridimensionali, collocate nello spazio espositivo o all'aperto e nelle quali dà importanza alla struttura piuttosto che alla massa, potrebbe essere inteso come scultore: queste sono infatti il risultato di un processo compositivo e nel contempo di forte riduzione. Spesso l'artista sottolinea la volontà di eliminare tutto ciò che è superfluo per rivelare ciò che è in nuce nell'opera che necessita di pochi elementi per apparire. Un continuo levare di forte valenza concettuale che controbilancia un aggiungere materico e operativo.

Questa sostanziale permeabilità e osmosi tra pittura e scultura è caratteristica delle opere di molti artisti del secondo dopoguerra: fare pittura con elementi materici e tridimensionali e definire lo spazio concettualizzandolo in un punto o in un'effrazione della superficie bidimensionale. È possibile notarlo ancor di più negli artisti della generazione successiva a cui Renzogallo appartiene; le sue opere segnano il continuo passaggio dalla bidimensionalità alla tridimensionalità, e viceversa, non per un'indifferenza tra le due condizioni ma per poter raggiungere ogni volta la condizione qualitativa necessaria a quella specifica opera. La contestuale presenza di boz-

sis between painting and sculpture is characteristic of the works of many post-World War II artists: painting with material and three-dimensional elements and defining space by conceptualizing it in a point or in a break of the two-dimensional surface. This is even more notable in the artists of the next generation, to which Renzogallo belongs: his works mark the continuous transition from two-dimensionality to three-dimensionality, and vice versa, not due to any indifference between the two conditions but to be able to reach, every time, the qualitative condition needed for that specific work. The contextual presence of three-dimensional sketches, drawings, paintings and sculptures in his Roman studio indicates that all the works in progress are the result of a continuous envisioning of an idea that is expressed in simultaneous ways in both one and the other.

The of the Oltre (Beyond) cycle displayed in the Roman exhibition have deliberately pictorial characteristics and should be considered as being inseparable from the larger production of his works from the last three years linked to the artist's reflections: on the essentiality of space, which is revealed in the shadows rather than in the light; on the inclusion of the observer in the work, generating gazes that qualitatively modify the landscape offered by the place;

zetti tridimensionali, disegni, pitture e sculture nel suo studio romano indica che tutte le opere in fieri sono frutto di una continua messa in visione di un'idea che si esplicita in modalità simultanee nell'una e nell'altra.

Le opere del ciclo Oltre nella mostra romana hanno caratteristiche volutamente pittoriche e vanno considerate come non scindibili da una sua più vasta produzione di opere dell'ultimo triennio che riguardano le riflessioni dell'artista: sull'essentialità dello spazio, che si rivela nell'ombra piuttosto che nella luce,



Renzogallo at his Studio

and on the need to maintain a strong tension between the history of art - not only of the West - and the present time.

The works were conceived after the production of the Rosso (Red) works, where the chromatic texture was the result of the patient juxtaposition of red satin ribbons placed on the canvas in a horizontal direction. The material had already appeared in previous three-dimensional works as an emphasis on the care and tension present in the volumes and in contrast to the metal elements. In the Rosso cycle it was an element with

sull'inclusione dell'osservatore nell'opera, generando sguardi che modificano qualitativamente il paesaggio offerto dal luogo, e sulla necessità di mantenere forte la tensione tra la storia dell'arte, non solo occidentale, e il tempo presente.

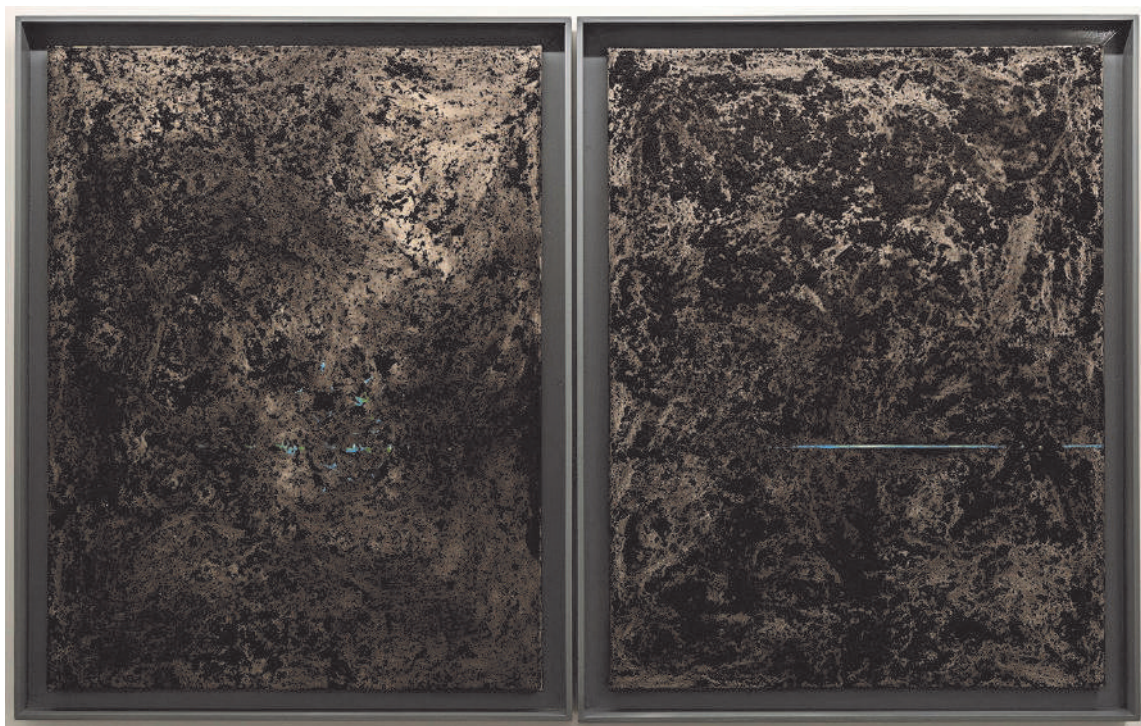
Queste opere nascono dopo la produzione dei Rosso in cui la tessitura cromatica è il risultato della paziente giustapposizione di nastri di raso rosso posti sulla tela con andamento orizzontale. Il materiale era già apparso in opere tridimensionali precedenti come sottolineatura della cura e della tensione presente nei volumi



Divario (Art Space)-Rome, view from exhibition

a strong pictorial presence: the iridescent, as the light and the position of the observer change, creates an effect that is alienating and strongly in tune with the post-Renaissance pictorial tradition, while the subtle balances between the parts and tones of the chromatic backgrounds recall and amplify the experience of the abstract overseas avant-garde of the postwar period. The use of large canvases, of anthropometric dimensions, increases the spatiality present in the works and the strongly empathic impact they have on the observer, who is both visually and physically involved.

e a contrasto con gli elementi metallici. Nel ciclo dei Rosso diviene elemento di forte presenza pittorica: il cangiantismo, al mutare della luce e della posizione dell'osservatore, crea un effetto stranianti e fortemente in sintonia con la tradizione pittorica post rinascimentale mentre i sottili equilibri tra le parti e tra i toni delle campiture cromatiche richiamano e amplificano l'esperienza delle avanguardie astratte d'oltreoceano del dopoguerra. L'uso di tele di grandi dimensioni, dalle misure antropometriche, aumenta la spazialità presente nelle opere e l'impatto fortemente empatico sull'osservatore, che risulta visivamente

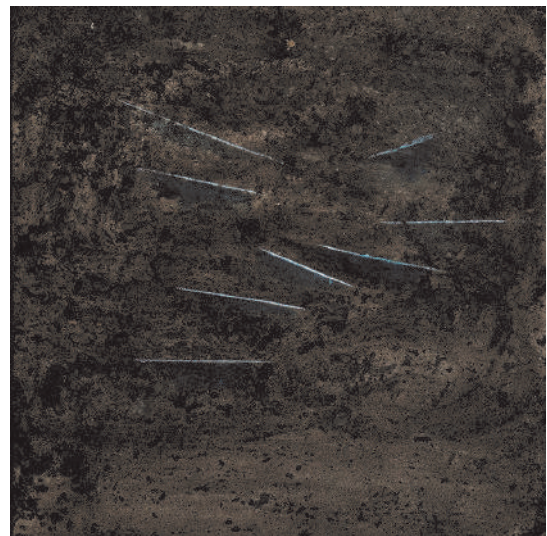


Που πάμε [Greek for where are we going], 2020, diptych, burning of newspapers, pigments and mixed media on canvas, on wood, 95x152x6 cm. (each work 95x75.5 cm.)

The tension between the work and the observer is also present in the seven canvases of the new Oltre cycle on display in the Roman exhibition in the Divario space. They have been made by applying residues from the burning of newspapers onto a prepared canvas. The use of fire and burnt elements has since the 1950s and 1960s appeared in the work of masters who have established it as a well-known expressive language. In his original manner, Renzogallo offers the observer a *pittura negra* in which figuration is almost entirely absent: only a few fragments of burnt newspapers are recognizable, on which in places uncertain printed letters emerge, the paintings have a horizontal orientation due to strips and many of them feature a line placed horizontally, made with a brush in the lower half of the painting, to mark a measure and a distance from the horizon present in the viewer's gaze. The thin line is sometimes inflamed with red brushstrokes almost as if to recall the energetic tension present rather than a naturalistic reference. The substantially monochrome palette, although it turns out to be the sum of a vast range of blacks and grays, is interrupted only by these horizontal pictorial lines and by the jolts of sudden brushstrokes that light up the vision without an apparent order but defining a harmonious compositional balance. The five largest canvases on display also point to another aspect of the artist's

e fisicamente coinvolto.

La tensione tra l'opera e l'osservatore è presente anche nelle sette tele del nuovo ciclo Oltre esposte nella mostra romana nello spazio Divario. Esse sono realizzate mediante l'applicazione, sulla tela preparata, di residui della combustione di quotidiani. L'uso del fuoco e di elementi combusti appare fin dagli anni Cinquanta e Sessanta nell'opera di maestri che ne hanno fatto un acclarato linguaggio espressivo. Renzogallo offre all'osservatore in modo originale una *pittura negra* in cui la figurazione è pressoché assente: sono riconoscibili solo pochi lacerti di giornali combusti sui quali a volte affiorano incerte lettere stampate, la pittura ha andamenti orizzontali per fasce e in molti è posta una linea orizzontale, realizzata a pen-



Untitled, 2022, burnt newspapers, pigments and chalk on canvas, on mdf, 42x42x4 cm.

spatial conception already present in previous works since the 1970s: namely that particularity of suggesting they belong to a wider extension, as though they might be details, with the same surface properties, of a larger whole. The limit of the picture thus turns out to be an incidental moment in the construction of a dimension that allows the gaze to immerse itself in the spatiality of painting.

The largest two canvases of the seven, placed on the two side walls at the entrance to the exhibition space, were conceived together without however forming a diptych: the digits two and zero appear in both and if placed side by side the two canvases would provide the date of the annus terribilis that marks the arrival of the pandemic in our country. The viewer finds themselves at the center of



Beyond, 2021, burnt newspapers, pigments and mixed media on canvas, 150x150 cm

nello nella metà inferiore del quadro, a segnare una misura e una distanza dall'orizzonte presente nello sguardo dell'osservatore. La sottile linea a volte si incendia di pennellate rosse quasi a ricordare la tensione energetica presente piuttosto che un riferimento naturalistico. La sostanziale monocromia, anche se risulta essere la sommatoria di una vastissima gamma di neri e grigi, viene interrotta solo da queste linee pittoriche orizzontali e dai guizzi di improvvise pennellate che illuminano la visione senza un apparente ordine ma definendo un armonico equilibrio compositivo. Le cinque tele più grandi in esposizione indicano anche un altro aspetto della concezione spaziale dell'artista già presente anche in opere precedenti fin dagli anni Settanta: ovvero la particolarità di sottintenderne l'appartenenza a un'estensione più ampia, come se esse potessero essere dei particolari, con le medesime proprietà superficiali, di un più vasto tutto. Il limite del quadro risulta così essere un momento incidentale della costruzione di una dimensione che permette allo sguardo di immergersi nella spazialità della pittura.

Le due tele di più grandi dimensioni delle sette, poste sulle due pareti laterali all'ingresso dello spazio espositivo, nascono insieme pur non creando un dittico: le cifre due e zero compaiono

an ideal tension field created by the presence of the two large *Oltre* paintings, both from 2021, facing each other. Immediately further on, in contrast due to their smaller dimensions, are two *Senza titolo* (Untitled) from 2021, similar in the use of materials, and, after the arch, there are two other works from 2021: the ver-

in entrambi e se accostate le due tele fornirebbero la data del *terribilis annus* che segna l'arrivo della pandemia nel nostro paese. L'osservatore si trova al centro di un ideale campo tensionale creato dalla presenza delle due grandi pitture *Oltre*, entrambe del 2021, che si fronteggiano. Subito dopo, a contrasto



Untitled, 2021, aluminum box with burnt newspaper and mixed media on wood, 14,5x14,5x5 cm.

tical Parole Parole bruciate/Andare oltre (Burnt words/Go beyond) of 2021, as well as, on the opposite wall, the diptych Πού πάμε [Greek for ‘where are we going’] from 2020. The viewer’s gaze is strongly involved by these last two works. The first creates a frontal correspondence with the verticality of the body of the viewer and presents inside of it the outline, drawn with the edge of a brush in a gray-blue color, of a structure similar to some parts of the environmental interventions created during in the latest period. It is the hint of a threshold, or an opening, which creates an engaging spatiality that is increased by the slight light reflection that the processing of this dark canvas produces, at times translucent, allowing a glimpse of the architectural form. This effect is due to the presence of the satin ribbon that makes up the texture of the surface in bands parallel to the line of the horizon. Differently, in the second work placed in front, the two canvases define the continuity of a horizontal line, from one to the other, as though to double the space and recreate the tension of a specularly only hinted at in the two large canvases positioned at the entrance.

Special mention must be made of a small work placed on the central wall that closes the back of the gallery space to create an ideal final point of visual escape, as if it were the fulcrum of the whole and the

per le dimensioni più piccole, due Senza titolo del 2021, simili per lavorazione materica e, oltre l’arco, sono collocate altre due opere del 2021: il verticale Parole bruciate / Andare oltre del 2021 e, sulla parete di fronte, il dittico Πού πάμε [dove andiamo in greco] del 2020. Lo sguardo dell’osservatore risulta fortemente coinvolto da queste due ultime due opere. La prima crea una corrispondenza frontale con la verticalità del corpo di chi la osserva e al suo interno presenta la sagoma, tracciata a fil di pennello con il colore grigio-azzurro, di una struttura simile ad alcune parti degli interventi ambientali realizzati nell’ultimo periodo. Si tratta dell’accento a una soglia, o a un varco, che crea una spazialità coinvolgente aumentata dalla leggera riflessione luminosa che la lavorazione di questa tela scura produce, a tratti traslucida, lasciando intravedere la forma architettonica. Questo effetto è dovuto alla presenza del nastro di raso che compone la tessitura della superficie in fasce parallele alla linea dell’orizzonte. Differentemente nella seconda opera posta di fronte alla precedente, le due tele definiscono la continuità di una linea orizzontale, da una all’altra, come se lo spazio si raddoppiasse e si ricreasse la tensione di una specularità solo accennata nelle due grandi tele poste all’ingresso.

spatiality created by the other works anticipated the viewer's relationship to it. Nami [Japanese for 'wave'] is a small, almost figurative painting from 2020, quite different from the others on display. One can see in it the presence of a vigorous brush-stroke: a sort of wave, indeed, which also recalls the artifice of Muybridge's bucket of water, later taken up by Bacon and by Hockney, a vital and energetic element, an indication of the possible overcoming of the pictorial condition of the other works: once again a going beyond, an opening to the future after the shadowy black surfaces that are perhaps more difficult for an uncultivated gaze².

*between the seventh new moon and the sea in
the year twenty twenty-two*

1 "[...] then painting and sculpture are one and the same thing; and so that it might be deemed such, every painter should not make less sculpting than painting; and, similarly, every sculptor should not make less painting than sculpting. I mean sculpting that thing which is done by dint of taking off; the one which is done by dint of adding is similar to painting; and it is enough that, since both painting and sculpture come from the same intelligence, we can reconcile them and abandon such disputes; because more time is spent in these than in making figures. [...]" Michelangelo Buonarroti, *Al Molto Mag. & Honorando M. Benedetto Varchi Suo Osservandiis*, in "Authors on Authorship", *Journal of Early Modern Studies*, vol. 1, n. 1 (2012), pp. 211-233 <http://www.fupress.com/bsfm-jems>.

2 "Umbra profunda sumus, ne nos vexetis inepti. Non vos, sed doctos tam grave quaerit

Particolare menzione deve essere fatta di una piccola opera posta sulla parete centrale che chiude il fondo dello spazio della galleria creando un ideale punto finale di fuga visiva, come se essa fosse il fulcro del tutto e la spazialità creata dalle altre opere anticipasse la relazione dell'osservatore con essa. Nami [onda in giapponese] è una piccola pittura quasi figurativa, del 2020, diversa dalle altre in mostra. In essa è riconoscibile la presenza di una vigorosa pennellata: una sorta di onda, appunto, che ricorda anche l'artificio della secchiata d'acqua di Muybridge, poi di Bacon e poi di Hockney, elemento vitale ed energetico, indicazione del possibile superamento della condizione pittorica delle altre opere: ancora un andare oltre, aprire al futuro dopo le ombrose superfici nere forse più ardue per uno sguardo incolto².

*tra la settima luna nuova e il mare nel duemila-
ventidue*

1 "[...] che la pittura, & la scultura è una medesima cosa, & perché la fussi tenuta così, non dovrebbe ogni Pittore far manco di scultura, che di pittura, e l' simile lo Scultore di pittura, che di scultura, io intendo scultura quella, che si fa per forza di levare, quella che si fa per via di porre, è simile alla pittura, basta, che venendo l'una & l'altra da una medesima intelligenza, cioè scultura, & pittura, si può far fare loro una buona pace insieme, & lasciar tante dispute, perché vi va più tempo, che à far le figure. [...]", Michelangelo Buonarroti, *Al Molto Mag. & Honorando M. Benedetto Varchi Suo Osservandiis*, in *Due Lezioni*

RENZOGALLO: INSIDE AND BEYOND PAINTING AND SCULPTURE

opus” “We are deep shadows, do not vex us, fools. A work so weighty is not for you, but for the learned” (Giordano Bruno in *De umbris idearum*). trad. in Diego Quaglioni, Introduzione, in Luigi Firpo, *Il processo di Giordano Bruno*, a cura di Diego Quaglioni, Salerno Editore, Roma 1993, p. XIX.

Renzogallo (Lorenzo Gallo, 1943) lives and works in Rome.

di M.Benedetto Varchi, Lorenzo Torrentino impressor ducale, Firenze 1549, pp. 154-155.

2 “Umbra profunda sumus, ne nos vexetis inepti. Non vos, sed doctos tam grave quaerit opus” (Giordano Bruno in *De Umbris idearum*: Io sono un'ombra profonda: non tormentatemi, o incolti. Impresa tanto ardua vuol gente dotta, non voi] trad. in Diego Quaglioni, Introduzione, in Luigi Firpo, *Il processo di Giordano Bruno*, a cura di Diego Quaglioni, Salerno Editore, Roma 1993, p. XIX.



Renzogallo at his Studio



REFLEXIVE ART REFLEKSİF SANAT

Ali Akay

The point that art has reached today pushes us towards an interesting discussion. Recently, the forms of making art have started to move from individuality to artist collectives. If we look at the year 2022, we see that the 15th Documenta and the Istanbul Biennial focus on historical documents such as women's resistance and the resistance of minorities in the form of collectives. Here, we can say that the influence of social and political sciences is strong. On the other hand, the idea of an artist began to remain in the background. It has become increasingly difficult to come across artist names in the context of large exhibitions, where communication is prioritized over creation. This does not mean that the art world has begun to politicize. On the contrary, it confronts us with the opposite situation: In the last few years, we have observed that ecology, along with sociology and anthropology, has begun to take its place in the art world. However, it must be reminded that art became

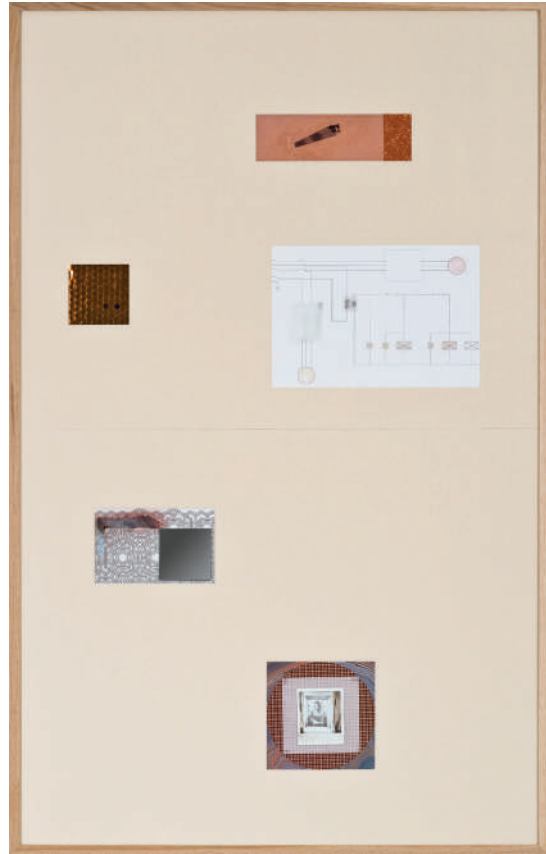
Günümüzde sanatın geldiği nokta ilginç bir tartışmaya doğru itmekte bizi. Son dönemde sanat yapma biçimleri giderek bireysellikten sanatçı kolektiflerine doğru yol almaya başladı. İçinden geçtiğimiz 2022 yılına bir bakacak olursak 15. Documenta ile İstanbul Bienali'nin benzer bir şekilde kolektifler niteliğinde kadın direnişi, azınlıkların direnişi vb. tarihe yönelik belgeler üzerine odaklandığını görürüz. Burada sosyal ve siyasal bilimlerin etkisinin kuvvetli olduğunu söyleyebiliriz. Diğer yandan sanatçı fikri ikinci planda kalmaya başladı. Yaratı yerine iletişimin öne alınmaya başlandığı büyük sergiler bağlamında gittikçe sanatçı isimlerine rastlamak zorlaşmaya başladı. Bu, sanat dünyasının siyasileşmeye başlamış olduğunu göstermez. Aksine ters bir durumla karşı karşıya bırakmakta bizleri: Sosyoloji ve antropolojiyle birlikte ekolojinin sanat dünyasında yer etmeye başladığını gözlemledik son birkaç senedir. Fakat hatırlatmak gerekecektir ki, sanat 1960-70'lerde de siyasi olmuştu. Hatta 1974 Venedik Bienali'nde, Şili'de

REFLEXSIVE ART

political in the 1960s-70s as well. Even in the 1974 Venice Biennale, the artists drew art towards the field of politics with their wall posters or their works, against the pressure on the mass, carried out with incredible brutality by General Pinochet, the head of the military junta that seized power with the coup d'etat against Allende in Chile. We have encountered these tendencies in Arte Povera exhibitions before. With the rising left movements in Italy, Arte Povera artists used the social space as a field of experience. However, looking at the examples given, were the creative artists who realized this resistance through reflection from the language of art.

Today, there is a communal discourse such as “learning together” in the language of collectives. Of course, it is very difficult to object to this; However, when we look at it from the other side, we can say that the reflexive creativity of the struggle of the elements within the field of art is also being waived. Starting from the point of an engaged art such as “Art is for ideological and political”, we can say that when the artist leaves the reflexive and linguistic area, stands like a homeless reed. There may be those who say that this is positive; but despite everything, I think what is missing is leaving the thought behind in the feeling of loneliness. Art has never been treated

Allende’ye karşı yapılan darbenin sonunda iktidarı ele geçiren askeri cuntanın başındaki General Pinochet’nin inanılmaz bir vahşetle yürütmüş olduğu kitle üzerine gerçekleştirilen baskıya karşı sanatçılar duvar afişleriyle veya yaptıkları eserleriyle sanatı siyaset alanına doğru çekmişlerdi. Daha evvel de bu eğilimlere Arte Povera sergilerinde rastladık. İtalya’da yükselen sol hareketlerle birlikte Arte Povera sanatçıları sosyal alanı bir tecrübe alanı olarak kullanmışlardı. Ancak verilen örneklerle bakıldığında, bu direnmeyi sanat dili içinden refleksiyon-



Seza Parker, 'Untitled (le mot cuivre)'

as communication as much as it is today. While language was researching the language of art by passing through itself, suddenly the art environment found itself in politics!

For the last twenty years, videos or video-archival works, video-collages, art as new arrangements, give us the opportunity to ask some questions while conveying the renewed viewpoint. One of these questions is what the documentary role of videos is. How much does art stand as a documentary? This question



Seza Parker, 'Untitled (le mot fluo jaune)'

la gerçekleştiren yaratıcı sanatçılardı.

Bugün kolektiflerin dilinde “birlikte öğrenme” gibi komünal bir söylem var. Buna itiraz etmek çok güç tabii; ancak diğer yandan baktığımızda sanat alanının kendi içindeki elemanlarının mücadelesinin refleksif yaratıcılığından da feragat edilmekte olduğunu söyleyebiliriz. “Sanat ideolojik ve siyasal içindir” gibi angaje bir sanatın gelmiş olduğu noktadan hareketle diyebiliriz ki, sanatçı refleksif ve kendi diline ait olan alandan ayrıldığında evsiz kamış gibi durmakta. Bunun olumlu olduğunu söyleyenler çıkabilir; ancak her şeye rağmen eksik kalan sanırım yalnızlık duygusu içinde düşüncenin arda bırakılması olacaktır. Sanat hiç bir zaman bugünkü kadar iletişim olarak ele alınmamıştır. Dil kendi içinden geçerek sanatın dilini araştırmaktayken birdenbire sanat ortamı siyasetin içinde buluvermiştir kendisini!

Son yirmi küsur yıldır, videolar veya video-arşiv çalışmaları, video-kolajlar yeni düzenlemeler olarak sanat, yenilenen görüş tarzını bize taşıırken bazı sorular sordurma imkânı da verir. Bu sorulardan biri videoların belgesel rolünün ne olduğudur. Sanat ne kadar belgesel olarak durmaktadır? Bu soru bir bakıma, 19. yüzyılda fotoğrafın ortaya çıkmasıyla sorulan bir soruyu hatırlatıyor. Fotoğrafın resim estetiğini nasıl değiştirdiği

is somewhat reminiscent of a question asked with the advent of photography in the 19th century. The question of how photography changed the aesthetics of painting was asked and discussed. The same question applies to today's digital arts to. In other words, the intensity of an issue that has been going on for two centuries, to the art scene today, points to a similar situation.

So if we repeat the question, we can ask: How art-dependent are documentary videos today? Can it go beyond being representative and answer an aesthetic problem? We can start by asking about the documental representation of the documentary. Therefore, the concern that representation has been left aside in modern arts persists. The questions asked by Deleuze's non-representational philosophy are of this nature. How is representation overcome? And, is it a fact that we need a more aesthetic and reflective work series instead of the representative one? Just as the aesthetics of painting turned towards a new problem of expression with the emergence of photography, it is possible to ask the same question again today.

An aesthetic problem presented as a problem of expression is now more a problem of reflection. In search of the artist's own world, the pictorial plas-

sorusu soruldu ve tartışıldı. Aynı soru bugünün dijital sanatları için de geçerli gibi durmakta. Yani, adını koyarsak, iki yüzyıldır süren bir meselenin bugünkü sanat ortamına taşıdığı yeğlilik benzer bir durumu işaret ediyor.

O halde, soruyu tekrarlarsak şöyle sorabiliriz: Bugün belgesel nitelikli videolar ne kadar sanata bağlı bir şekilde ortaya çıkmaktadır? Temsili olmaktan öteye geçerek acaba estetik bir soruna cevap verebilmekte midir? Belgeselin belge temsilini sorarak başlayabiliriz. O halde, modern sanatlarda temsiliyetin bir kanara bırakılmış olması gibi bugün de aynı kaygı sürmektedir. Deleuze'ün temsil dışı felsefesinin sorduğu sorular da bu mahiyettedir. Temsil nasıl aşılmaktadır? Ve temsili olanın yerine daha estetik ve refleksiyona bağlı bir çalışma dizisine ihtiyacımız olduğu bir vakıa olarak karşımıza çıkmakta mıdır? Nasıl ki resim estetiği fotoğrafın ortaya çıkmasıyla yeni bir ifade sorununa doğru yönelmişti, aynı şekilde bugün yine aynı soruyu sormamız mümkündür.

İfade sorunu olarak sunulan bir estetik sorun bugün daha çok bir refleksiyon sorunu olarak karşımıza çıkmaktadır. Sanatçının kendi dünyasının arayışı içinde; resimsel olan plastik bakış ilginç bir şekilde sorularla beraber işlemektedir. Tıpkı Danimarkalı dilbilimci Louis Hjem-

tic gaze interestingly works together with the questions. Just as the Danish linguist, Louis Hjemleves has said and reminded by Deleuze and Guattari in Kafka, a situation that has been or has been experienced contains questions about today's reflection. How far is the reflection? Does this go beyond any undeveloped idea? How far can artist go beyond his/her confidant world? Does the artist spend his/her time and even all of the time to further his/her work, which deepened and worked on? This brings with it the idea of "all time"; but we have to put that aside, because this is a completely different issue.

Now, to what extent does the artist mutilate or devalue his/her work when treats an idea, an image as representation, or worse, works with symbols? Is this what happens? When the artist presents the representative as a document, which of the most important problems of our time is faced? What does a post-representational documentary mean? When we attempt to address a philosophical problem of this time, we encounter a very practical aesthetic question. This question still stands in front of them today as a question that the artists who use archives ask themselves.

Showing the unseen, revealing the

leves'in söylemiş olduğu ve Deleuze ve Guattari'nin Kafka kitabında hatırlatmış oldukları gibi yaşanmakta veya yaşanmış olan bir durum, bugünün refleksiyonuna dair soruları içinde barındırmaktadır. Nereye kadar refleksiyon? Bu, geliştirilmemiş herhangi bir fikrin ötesine geçebilmekte midir? Sanatçı nereye kadar kendi sırdaş dünyasından daha öteye gidebilmektedir? Sanatçı daha da derinleştirdiği ve üzerinde çalıştığı işini daha ileriye taşımak için, zamanını ve hata tüm zamanını harcamakta mıdır? Bu, "tüm zaman" fikrini de beraberinde getirmektedir; ama bunu bir kenara bırakmak zorundayız, çünkü bu bambaşka bir konu olarak karşımıza çıkmaktadır.

Şimdi, sanatçı bir fikri, bir imajı temsiliyet olarak ele aldığında veya daha da kötüsü sembollerle çalıştığında eserini ne ölçüde sakatlamakta veya değersizleştirmektedir? Böyle mi oluyor? Temsili olanı bir belge olarak gösterdiğinde, günümüzün sorunlarının en önemlilerinden hangisiyle karşı karşıya kalınmaktadır? Temsiliyet sonrası bir belgesel ne demektir? Bu zamana ait felsefi bir sorunu ele almaya kalkıştığımız zaman tam da pratik estetik bir soruyla karşılaşyoruz. Bu soru bugün arşiv kullanan sanatçıların kendi kendilerine sorduğu bir soru olarak önlerinde durmaktadır.

Görülmeveni göstermek, bilinmeyene

REFLEXIVE ART



All Well Revisited

unknown by touching, making an arrangement by going through the archive, and revealing a new arrangement from the collections of art museums are among the artistic problematics of today. Images of the World and the Writing of War (1988) and Harun Farocki's video film works, Sarkis's collection works on the world of Warburg with museums, Seza Paker's videos on his own archive since the 1980's (The Long March-1999), Ahmet Ögüt's speech at the Harvard Art Museum in 2015 is a good example of forcing representation.

In the book I wrote on Seza Paker, I said that her work depends on reflexive fluidities (Seza Paker, *Reflexive Fluidities* 2015). We can clearly see the reflections of the reflexive fluidity I mentioned in Seza Paker's videos, installations, sound sculptures using sound (firstly 2008-All Well, then 2009-LAK7216A), sound installations (for example Future Archive -2018) and assemblages she makes (2010-Family Trees- 2015-Absinthe). In 2019, I can say that one of the culminations of assemblages was realized with the "Passing Through" exhibition.

The Passing by exhibition invites us to confront the concept of "passing by". The artist acts with an integrative approach that incorporates different periods into a cosmos. Here,

dokunarak ortaya çıkarmak, arşivin içinden geçerek bir düzenleme yapmak, sanat müzelerinin koleksiyonlarından yeni bir düzenleme ortaya çıkarmak bugünkü sanatsal sorunsallıklar arasında durmakta. Dünyanın İmajları ve Savaşın Yazısı (1988) ile Harun Farocki'nin video film çalışmaları, Sarkis'in müzelerle yaptığı Warburg dünyasına ait koleksiyon çalışmaları, Seza Paker'in 1980'lerden beri kendi arşivi üzerine yaptığı videolar (The Long March-1999), Ahmet Ögüt'ün 2015'te Harvard Art Müzesi konuşması, temsiliyeti zorlamanın güzel örnekleridir.

Seza Paker üzerine yazdığım kitapta onun eserinin refleksif akışkanlıklara bağlı olduğunu söylemişim (Seza Paker, *Refleksif Akışkanlıklar* 2015). Bilhassa Seza Paker'in videolarında, enstalasyonlarında, sesi kullanarak yaptığı sesli heykellerde (öncelikle 2008- All Well, sonra 2009-LAK7216A), ses enstalasyonlarında (örneğin Future Archive -2018) ve yaptığı asamblajlarda (2010-Family Trees-2015-Absinthe) sözünü ettiğim refleksif akışkanlıkların karşılığını açıkça görebiliriz. 2019 yılında ise "Geçerken" sergisi ile asamblajların doruk noktalarından birisini gerçekleştirdiğini söyleyebilirim.

Geçerken sergisi bizi "geçerken" kavramıyla yüzleşmeye çağırıyor. Sanatçı birbirinden farklı dönemleri bir kozmos içine alan bütünleştirici bir yaklaşımla

many worldly issues are juxtaposed as Seza Parker often does. It shows that violence against women and violence against nature cannot be separated from each other. The artist, who creates works with poor natural materials, reflects the material world in her works by passing through abstract thought. A sound installation from 2008 turns into a scaled-down sound sculpture. Here, All Well is considered on another scale and its materials are adapted accordingly. "All Well" draws a new historical moment starting with 1989 when everything went well (the fall of the Berlin wall) towards the 2008 economic crisis. While it seems that everything is going well (from the victory of liberal capitalism in which everything is pink with Fukuyama's "end of history" rhetoric), our social and economic relations, which have turned into a black well in 2008 with the structural crisis of world capitalism, are discussed. The skateboard surface that Seza Parker created based on Gus Van Sand's film and the sounds of the skateboard passing over it express the states of freedom and ecstasy. These voices entering into each other intersect with the melancholic tone of Miles Davis. This shiny black plexiglass material standing on the surface indicates the event passing through the surface. The event is passing through the surface; the depths reveal the state of

hareket ediyor. Burada, Seza Parker'in sıklıkla yaptığı gibi dünyasal olan birçok sorun yan yana getirilmekte: Kadına şiddet ile doğaya şiddetin birbirlerinden ayıramayacağını gösteriyor. Doğaya ait fakir malzemelerle eser yaratan sanatçı soyut düşünce içinden geçerek maddi dünyayı eserlerinde yansıtıyor. 2008 yılına ait bir sesli enstalasyon, ölçekleri küçülen bir sesli heykele dönüşüyor. Burada All Well başka bir ölçekte ele alınmakta ve malzemeleri de ona göre uyarlanmaktadır. "All Well" her şeyin iyi gittiği 1989 ile başlayan yeni bir tarihi anı (Berlin duvarının yıkılması) 2008 ekonomik krizine doğru çekmekte. Her şeyin iyi gittiği sanılırken (Fukuyama'nın "tarihin sonu" söylemiyle her şeyin pespembe olduğu liberal bir kapitalizmin zaferinden) 2008 yılında dünya kapitalizminin bugüne doğru gelen yapısal kriziyle kara bir kuyu haline gelen sosyal ve ekonomik ilişkilerimiz ele alınmakta. Seza Parker'in Gus Van Sand'ın filminden yola çıkarak düşündüğü kaykay yüzeyi ve üzerinden geçen kaykay sesleri, özgürlük ve vecd hallerini ifade etmekte. Birbirleri içinde giren bu sesler Miles Davis'in melankolik tınısıyla kesişmekte. Yüzeyde duran bu parlak siyah pleksiglas malzeme yüzeyden geçen olayı işaret etmekte. Olay yüzeyden geçmekte; derinlikler ise kuyu ile kendi karanlık bedeninin vaziyetlerini ortaya koymakta: Kuyunun karanlığı içindeki bileşkelerin toplamıdır. 2008

the well and its own dark body: It is the sum of the components in the darkness of the well. The scale of the work made in 2008, reduced and reinterpreted by the artist. The materials are not exactly the same, because the conditions of 2008 and 2019 are not exactly the same, and the ongoing structural crisis continues to grow and continue its weight with harder and more ridiculous events. Events passing through the surface transfer causes to causes and effects to effects. A corpus is formed between causes, but events pass through from outside not through inside.

Making an arrangement by looking at all these artistic examples, accumulated photographs, papers, correspondence, confidential information, news that has not come to light, and looking at what was under the iceberg in a different way, in a way, reminds the "Mnemonic Atlas" work of art historian Aby Warburg. What looks like a document problem returns to us as a reflection problem. How an artwork is can be performed without being represented not as an idea or a situation but as a narrative or even as multiple narratives? How can the arrangement between leftover photographs and the most well-known works be developed with a thought and based on a durability plan? This is not a symbol or representational narrative;

yılında yapılan eserin ölçeği küçültülerek sanatçı tarafından yeniden yorumlanmakta. Malzemeler tam aynı değil, çünkü 2008 şartlarıyla 2019 şartları tam olarak aynı olmadığı gibi sürekli olan yapısal kriz daha da büyüyerek ağırlığını daha sert ve daha saçma olaylarla sürdürmekte. Yüzeyden geçen olaylar nedenleri nedenlere ve etkileri etkilere doğru aktarmakta. Nedenler arasında bir korpus oluyor, ancak olaylar içinden değil, üzerinden geçiyor.

Bütün bu sanatsal örnekler, birikmiş fotoğraflar, kâğıtlar, yazışmalar, gizli kalmış bilgiler, gün ışığına çıkmamış haberler ve buzdağının altında kalanlara başka türlü bakarak, bir düzenleme yapmak bir anlamda, sanat tarihçisi Aby Warburg'un "Mnemonic Atlas" çalışmasını hatırlatır. Bir belge sorunu gibi duran bir refleksiyon sorunu olarak döner bizlere. Bir fikir veya bir durum değil bir anlatı olarak veya hatta birden çok anlatı olarak temsil edilmeden, bir eser nasıl gerçekleştirilir? Arda kalmış fotoğraflar ile en bilindik eserler arasındaki düzenleme bir düşünce ile gelişerek nasıl bir dayanıklılık planı üzerine oturtulabilir? Bu, bir sembol veya temsiliyet anlatısı değil, tersine bir refleksif anlatı olarak durmaktadır ve bizi düşünmeye itecek olan kudreti taşımaktadır. Hikâyeler, tarihi olaylar olarak kendilerinden başka bir şeyi temsil etmezler burada, ama sanatçılar bu tip

on the contrary, it stands as a reflexive narrative and has the power to make us think. The stories do not represent anything other than themselves as historical events, but the artists present the unrepresentable rather than the narrative represented in such works. In this sense, the artist's own reflections begin to become visible by shifting towards the intersection of other non-representational narratives, leaving the representational aside. Documentary view as art is no longer representation, but becomes a reflection.

As the French historian Arlette Farge writes, “an archive is neither like text nor printed documents nor relations nor newspapers or correspondence. As a reflection and a reorganized idea, the archive begins to present itself to the audience. In this sense, the newspaper and the work are elements of the same level, as is often shown in modern arts. Whatever arrangement the daily life carries the archivist towards, the art also moves towards this arrangement. Materially, that's what thought might mean. It is an invitation to travel and it de-territorializes the existing document. In this way, the concept of reflexive frees itself from the meaning used by Kant and carries the thought and its image out of representation. Thus, art begins to be reflexive, not representational.

çalışmalarda temsil edilen anlatıyı değil de temsil edilemeyi bize sunmaktadırlar. Kendi refleksiyonları, bu anlamda, bir başka temsil dışı anlatıların kesiştiği bir yöne doğru kayarak, görünür hale gelmeye başlar ve temsili olanı bir kenara bırakır. Temsil değildir artık sanat olarak belgesel bakış, ama bir refleksiyon haline gelmektedir.

Fransız tarihçi Arlette Farge'ın yazdığı gibi “arşiv ne metne ne basılı belgelere ne ilişkilere ne de gazetelere veya mektuplaşmalara benzer”. Bir refleksiyon, yeni baştan düzenlenen bir düşünce olarak arşiv, kendisini izleyiciye sunmaya başlar. Gazete ve eser bu anlamda modern sanatlarda da sık sık gösterildiği gibi aynı düzeyin öğeleridir. Gündelik yaşam hangi düzenlemeye doğru taşımaktaysa arşivciyi, sanat da bu düzenlemeye doğru gitmektedir. Maddi olarak düşünce belki de bu demektir. Bir yolculuk davetidir ve var olan belgeyi yersiz-yurdsuzlaştırır. Refleksif kavramı tam da bu şekilde Kant'ın kullandığı anlamından kendisini kurtarır ve temsiliyet dışına taşır düşünceyi ve görselini. Böylelikle sanat refleksif olmaya başlar temsili değil.



LIGHTNESS IS THE RHYTHM OF VANISHING THE ABSTRACTION OF ELIO CASSARÀ* LA LEGGEREZZA È IL RITMO DELLO SVANIRE L'ASTRAZIONE DI ELIO CASSARÀ*

Tommaso Evangelista

Analyzing the work of Elio Cassarà, the first reflection that emerges concerns the language of how indeed minimal signs determining an interpenetration of energies, *synérgeia* define a grammar of transparency. Colour, brushstroke, structure become acts of representation of a hermetic totality, which manages to maintain the necessary antinomic balance at every moment of its revealing action. This is possible thanks to the fact that the chromatic structure is also determined as a symbolic organism, which expands the potential of the act to the infinity. The images generated by Cassarà are powerful and poetic, because they assume through the force of language the symbolic dimension of their source, and are “constructed” by a revealing act of internal relationships, which takes place on different levels of objectification.

Analizzando l'opera di Elio Cassarà la prima riflessione che emerge riguarda il linguaggio ovvero di come segni minimi, determinando un compenetrarsi delle energie, *synérgeia*, definiscono una grammatica della trasparenza. Colore, pennellata, struttura diventano atti della rappresentazione di una totalità ermetica, la quale riesce a mantenere in ogni momento della propria azione rivelatrice il necessario equilibrio antinomico. Ciò è possibile grazie al fatto che la struttura cromatica si determina anche come organismo simbolico che fa espandere all'infinito le potenzialità dell'atto. Le immagini generate da Cassarà sono potenti e poetiche perché assumono, attraverso la forza del linguaggio, la dimensione simbolica della scaturigine e vengono “costruite” da un atto rivelativo di rapporti interni, il quale si attua su diversi piani di oggettivazione.

That the artist makes a work of montage rather than total abstraction? A tonal, rhythmic and melodic montage in an attempt to grasp the relationship between real space and the eye is evident in the search for planes and levels. The artist shows another depth, a sort of archetypal palimpsest obtained through an excavation in the subsoil, below the aesthetic skin and the arbitrariness of the sign or, if you like, below the cultural and historical orography, because feeble engrams can be traced right from the icons. In Elio's works, the essentiality of the space becomes the structure that reveals, as in the icons, the pure forms, it does not stiffen them in the suspension, and therefore these function as devices for focusing and concentrating forces. If colour here is the basis for a structured composition



Untitled, oil on canvas, 2021, 80x80 cm.

Che l'artista faccia un'opera di montaggio più che di astrazione totale? Un montaggio tonale, ritmico e melodico nel tentativo di cogliere i rapporti tra spazio reale ed occhio è evidente nella ricerca dei piani e dei livelli. L'artista mostra un'altra profondità, una sorta di palinsesto archetipico ottenuto attraverso uno scavo nel sottosuolo, al di sotto della scorza estetica e dell'arbitrarietà del segno o, se si vuole, al di sotto dell'orografia culturale e storica, perché flebili engrammi possono essere rintracciati proprio a partire dalle icone. Nelle opere di Elio l'essentialità dello spazio diventa la struttura che rivela, come nelle icone, le forme pure, non le irrigidisce nella sospensione, e pertanto queste funzionano come dispositivi di messa a fuoco e concentrazione di forze. Se il colore qui è alla base per una composizione strutturata tipo palinsesto, il ritmo serve alla rappresentazione di un dinamismo fatto di rapporti spaziali e geometrici.

È di certo anche la Natura a far da guida all'intera produzione di Cassarà. Una natura all'inizio ricercata in paesaggi ombrosi e cupi, sebbene ancora vagamente figurativi, ma quasi subito rincorsa prima in traiettorie parallele di sintesi e successivamente in configurazioni di forme maggiormente libere. Alla base della sua pittura vi è un costante tentativo di stabilire lo spazio cromatico,

such as a palimpsest, rhythm serves to represent a dynamism made up of spatial and geometric relationships.

Also it is certainly that nature guides the entire production of Cassarà. A nature initially sought in shady and gloomy landscapes, although still vaguely figurative, but almost immediately chased first in parallel trajectories of synthesis and subsequently in configurations of more free forms. At the basis of his painting there is a constant attempt to establish the chromatic space, canceling volumes and deconstructing the idea of the landscape so that light is not only an internal factor in the work but is born from chromatic and plastic synthesis, overlaps and joints. The transfiguration of the gaze is a silent break of the retinal dimension for the acquisition of a fractionated and deconstructed point of view, changeable in the incongruity of its spatial divisions, which emanate ever-changing flashes influenced now by the internal landscape now by the external one. In this regard, it is interesting to record how a sacred and melodic brilliance began to explode especially during his stay in Russia, a sort of illumination that led the artist towards a more cogent synaesthetic dimension.

There is also an attempt to reconsider the field areas, working on intervals and

annullando i volumi e decostruendo l'idea del paesaggio sicché la luce non è solamente un fattore interno all'opera ma nasce per sintesi cromatiche e plastiche, sovrapposizioni e giunzioni. La trasfigurazione dello sguardo è una silenziosa rottura della dimensione retinica per l'acquisizione di un punto di vista frazionato e decostruito, mutevole nell'incongruenza delle sue divisioni spaziali, le quali emanano bagliori sempre diversi influenzati ora dal paesaggio interiore ora da quello esteriore. Interessante a riguardo registrare come una lucentezza sacrale e melodica abbia cominciato ad esplodere soprattutto durante la permanenza in Russia, una sorta di illuminazione che ha condotto l'artista verso una dimensione sinestetica più cogente.

Vi è altresì il tentativo di riconsiderare le



Untitled, oil on canvas, 2021, 70x70 cm.

distances, mediating between analytical configuration and contrasting morphology, in an excess of assimilations and correspondences that make the works perpetually "open" and continuous. In this clash between natural and artificial here is the hypothesis of a painting created by extensions and equivalences, through parallelisms of amplitudes which change a rhizomatic and stochastic arrangement from the chromatic spectrum. Summative vision of the view and the landscape, certainly, but which also qualifies as an inner vibration, a personal and poetic perception of the spatial structure seen in its fragility and vagueness of threshold and wind.

In the latest works, the insistence on white allows for a different research on light, now tending towards neutral



Untitled, oil on canvas 80x80 cm.

aree di campo, lavorando su intervalli e distanze, mediando tra configurazione analitica e morfologia contrastante, in un eccesso di assimilazioni e corrispondenze che rendono le opere perennemente "aperte" e continue. In questo scontro tra naturale e artificiale ecco l'ipotesi di una pittura creata per estensioni ed equivalenze, attraverso parallelismi di ampiezze le quali mutano dallo spettro cromatico una disposizione rizomatica e stocastica. Visione sommativa della veduta e del paesaggio, certamente, ma che si qualifica anche come vibrazione interiore, percezione personale e poetica della struttura spaziale vista nella sua fragilità e vaghezza di soglia e di vento.

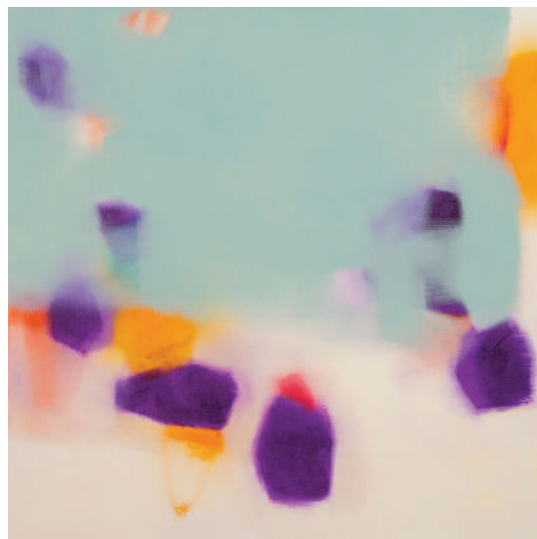
Nelle ultime opere l'insistere sul bianco permette una diversa ricerca sulla luce, tendente ora su note neutre intervallate da spiazzanti accenni di colore, e un rapporto differente con l'osservatore chiamato a relazionarsi con le opere, modificando il punto di vista per determinare personalmente mutazioni di superfici e ombre. Infatti, quando tutto sembra andare verso un mondo senza oggetto, come un barlume di reale, riportato in vita quasi sicuramente dall'amore dell'artista per i Peredvižniki, gli Ambulanti, ritorna una dimensione fortemente lirica, quasi romantica della Natura, contemplata, studiata e ricreata

notes interspersed with unsettling hints of color, and a different relationship with the observer called to relate to the works, modifying the point of view to determine personally mutations of surfaces and shadows. In fact, when everything seems to go towards a world without an object, like a glimmer of reality, almost certainly brought back to life by the artist's love for the Peredvizhniki, the Peddlers, a strongly lyrical, almost romantic dimension of Nature returns, contemplated, studied and recreated on the canvas. Thus emerges that exclusively Russian conception of the landscape, which, although tragic, poignant and melancholic, is capable of lifting the spirit from the crudeness of the present. Iridescent or not, however, Cassarà's works impose themselves on critics for their unpublished chromatic synthesis and for a narration of nature reduced to a summary and center, an intense recapitulation of a lack: the formless that becomes a trace can do without the sublime. Count the mutual wonder.

His is a vision in transparency that looks at the shadow as a substance but only to materialize, from the indistinct, the direction of the gaze to which the whole is denied; a vision that, in the need to give concrete form to the limit, brings out a very light structure from the destabilization of the bodies. The beauty of

sulla tela, ed emerge in tal modo quella concezione esclusivamente Russa del paesaggio il quale, pur se tragico, struggente e malinconico, è capace di sollevare lo spirito dalla crudezza del presente. Cangianti o meno, comunque, i lavori di Cassarà si impongono alla critica per le sintesi cromatiche inedite e per una narrazione della natura ridotta a riassunto e centro, intensa ricapitolazione di una mancanza: l'informe che diventa traccia può fare a meno del sublime. Conta la reciproca meraviglia.

La sua è una visione in trasparenza che guarda all'ombra come sostanza ma solo per materializzare, dall'indistinto, la direzione dello sguardo al quale viene negato l'insieme; una visione che, nel bisogno di dare forma concreta al limite, fa emergere una struttura legge-



Untitled, oil on canvas, 2021, 70x70 cm.

LIGHTNESS IS THE RHYTHM OF VANISHING THE ABSTRACTION OF ELIO CASSARÀ

the works, therefore, derives from a poetic linked to imperfection, impermanence and incompleteness, perhaps also to the suffering of worldly things, which however, in the moment of collapse, are capable of becoming the fulcrum and logic of the invisible. The ability to create, in traces of emptiness a fullness of imponderable meaning derives from the ability to remove rather than add, to slow down rather than speed up, to value the silence and the ambiguous fragility of the world more than the back-

rissima dalla destabilizzazione dei corpi. La bellezza delle opere, quindi, deriva da una poetica legata all'imperfezione, all'impermanenza e incompletezza, forse anche alla sofferenza delle cose mondane, le quali però, nell'attimo del collasso, sono capaci di diventare fulcro e logica dell'invisibile. La capacità di creare, in tracce di vuoto, una pienezza di senso imponderabile deriva dall'abilità di togliere più che aggiungere, di rallentare più che accelerare, di dare valore al silenzio e alla fragilità ambigua del mon-



Untitled, oil on canvas, 2022, 100x130 cm.

ground noise, to imagining rather than building as the form acquires a minimal and silent component from the sudden idea, a collected and sweet configuration that leads the observer along a path full of interruptions, slowdowns, encounters and pauses.

In the artist's world, transparent light is a stratagem against the dictatorship of decay, it is a form of reconstruction of a presence that overcomes the Western fascination for the formless and reconfigures an aspect of the trace, it is the continuity of the surfaces towards an organic character in this poetics of the vague and indefinite of the East. In this movement of forms, the authentic search for essence, synthesizing time and space, reveals to us the evanescence of creation, which corresponds somewhat to the levity of the heartbeat. A paradoxical being able to represent nature only by abandoning it with delicacy. And this, perhaps, is the last fruit, unpredictable and unexpected, of his poetics. Lightness is the rhythm of vanishing.

*Elio Cassarà was born in Mazara del Vallo in 1974. His painting soon tends towards abstractionism, due to the intense effects of light and the expressiveness of color in the narration of landscapes. His paintings capture the

do più che al rumore di fondo, di immaginare più che costruire in quanto la forma acquista dall'idea improvvisa una componente minimale e silenziosa, una configurazione raccolta e dolce che conduce l'osservatore in un sentiero pieno di interruzioni, rallentamenti, incontri e pause.

Nel mondo dell'artista la luce trasparente è uno stratagemma contro la dittatura del disfacimento, è forma di ricostruzione di una presenza che vince il fascino occidentale per l'informe e riconfigura un aspetto della traccia, è continuità delle superfici verso un carattere organico in questa poetica del vago e dell'indefinito d'Oriente. In tale moto di forme la ricerca autentica dell'essenza, sintetizzando tempo e spazio, ci rivela l'evanescenza della creazione, che corrisponde un po' alla levità della pulsazione del cuore. Un paradossale poter rappresentare la natura solo abbandonandola con delicatezza. E questo, forse, è l'ultimo frutto, imprevedibile e inaspettato, della sua poetica. La leggerezza è il ritmo dello svanire.

*Elio Cassarà nasce a Mazara del Vallo nel 1974. La sua pittura tende ben presto all'astrattismo, riconducibile agli intensi effetti di luce e all'espressività del colore nella narrazione dei paesaggi. Nei suoi quadri si coglie la natura evolutiva

LIGHTNESS IS THE RHYTHM OF VANISHING THE ABSTRACTION OF ELIO CASSARÀ

evolutionary nature of painting, based on careful observation of the environment which dissolves into a liquid vision, full of suggestions and evocations. After having trained in Venice, the city where he has lived since 1997, in 2001 he moved to Berlin where he lived for many years holding various personal exhibitions. At the end of 2020 he moved to Moscow where he currently lives and works.

della pittura, basata sull'attenta osservazione dell'ambiente che si dissolve in una visione liquida, ricca di suggestioni ed evocazioni. Dopo essersi formato a Venezia, città nella quale ha risieduto dal 1997, nel 2001 si trasferisce a Berlino dove vive per molti anni realizzando diverse mostre personali. Alla fine del 2020 si è trasferito a Mosca dove attualmente vive e lavora.



Untitled, oil on canvas, 2021, 130x70 cm.



MURMUR OF THE LANDSCAPE IL MORMORIO DEL PAESAGGIO

Jorge Antonio Fernández Torres

As if any trace of the urban representation of our Island had been erased, this is the sensation one feels in front of the photographic series "Pre Mundo" by the Italian artist Brunella Longo. The artist continues to rewrite the history of the travelers who preceded her and who imagined this country, she ventures across our territory following a single route, the one offered by nature. The artist listens to the murmur of the woods and the conversation that emerges from beings who are not satisfied with being reduced to a simple botanical nomenclature. Brunella sets a trap for us, eliminates any parameter that could compromise the historical chronology of the time, the observers can be both aboriginals and us men of our time who observe the process from cell phones or other objects that digitally compact what the image gives us arouses. For Longo, time is affective, it has to do with the freedom of what presents itself because it involves us, immerses us in a composition that creates the mirage

Come se fosse stata cancellata qualsiasi traccia di rappresentazione urbana della nostra Isola, è la sensazione che si avverte di fronte alla serie fotografica "Pre Mundo" dell'artista italiana Brunella Longo. L'artista continua a riscrivere la storia dei viaggiatori che l'hanno preceduta e che hanno immaginato questo paese, si avventura percorrendo il nostro territorio seguendo un'unica rotta, quella offerta dalla natura. L'artista si pone all'ascolto del mormorio dei boschi e la conversazione che emerge da esseri che non si accontentano di essere ridotti ad una semplice nomenclatura della botanica. Brunella ci tende una trappola, elimina ogni parametro che possa compromettere la cronologia storica del tempo, gli osservatori possono essere sia degli aborigeni quanto noi uomini del nostro tempo che osserviamo il processo dai cellulari o da altri oggetti che compattano digitalmente ciò che l'immagine ci suscita. Il tempo per la Longo è affettivo, ha a che vedere con la libertà di ciò che si presenta per-

MURMUR OF THE LANDSCAPE



Cuba / Pre Mundo (journey of initiation in images)





Cuba / Pre Mundo (journey of initiation in images)



of touching a reality that escapes us.

“Pre Mundo” possesses the complexity referred to by the Finnish architect Alvar Aalto, the roots of trees behave in the same way as cells in their processes of meiosis and mitosis, and they grow eternally fixed to the earth. Brunella and Alvar Aalto know that the best architecture is the one that emerges from nature, which is why the sense of what we do cannot lose its organicity. Longo's work presents us with trees as immense buildings that suggest an uncontaminated environment, it does not hide its erotic morphology, and highlights its carnality. The use of black and white allows us to see with a different filter the fall of light and the contrasts between the wide range of whites, greys and blacks, which accentuate the drama of the figuration.

The result of what we see in the work of Brunella Longo has clear affinities with the photography with strong expressionist connotations of Sergei Urusevsky in the direction of photography of the film “Soy Cuba”. The tape of film was developed with the infrared technique; there are scenes where the vision is very similar to the X-ray process, so the film's narrative succumbs to the power of the film's image. “Pre Mundo” does not want to tell us a story, the nexus of the discourse is based on the forms we discover, there

ché ci coinvolge, ci immerge in una composizione che crea il miraggio di toccare con mano una realtà che ci sfugge.

“Pre Mundo” possiede la complessità a cui si riferiva l'architetto finlandese Alvar Aalto, le radici degli alberi si comportano alla stessa maniera delle cellule nei loro processi di meiosi e mitosi, crescono fissate alla terra eternamente. Brunella e Alvar Alto sanno che la miglior architettura è quella che emerge dal naturale, ecco perché il senso di quello che facciamo non può perdere la sua organicità. L'opera della Longo ci presenta gli alberi come degli immensi edifici che ci suggeriscono un ambiente incontaminato, non nasconde la sua morfologia erotica, ed evidenzia la sua carnalità. L'uso del bianco e nero ci fa vedere con un filtro diverso la caduta della luce ed i contrasti tra l'ampia gamma dei bianchi, dei grigi e dei neri che accentuano la drammaticità della figurazione.

Il risultato di ciò che vediamo nell'opera di Brunella Longo presenta delle chiare affinità con la fotografia dalle forti connotazioni espressioniste di Sergei Urusevsky nella direzione della fotografia del film “Soy Cuba”. La pellicola del film è stata sviluppata con la tecnica degli infrarossi, ci sono scene in cui la visione assomiglia molto al processo dei raggi X, per cui la narrativa della pellicola soccombe

is something wild in everything that is not visible, and the vegetation creates a clear connection with the morphology that is close to the animal world. It is a sensibility where the fascination of the forms springs from that supposed fear that is produced by entering the primitive, which is like entering the unknown. In the work of Brunella Longo we perceive the prolongation of the manifestation of the event over time; anything could happen at any moment but not being able to know the possible epilogue, the artist prefers to keep the action suspended and move the dilemma in the mind of the observer.

Brunella does not distort what she sees in the camera, she knows that the earth has the shape of a sphere not because it has been scientifically proven but because our aesthetic conception and our imagination confirm it. This is why the thickness of the vegetation is present not only in shots with large depths of field but also in the shots of small details that brings out the plasticity of the fragments. This means that the frontality highlights the play of the composition and that in many cases the perspective, as if it were only suggested, remains in the shadows. In some moments the artist's intent recalls the spirit of Wilfredo Lam in his most important work "La Jungla". The characters of this great

di fronte al potere dell'immagine.

"Pre Mundo" non vuole raccontarci una storia, il nesso del discorso si basa sulle forme che scopriamo, c'è qualcosa di selvaggio in tutto quello che non è visibile, la vegetazione crea una chiara connessione con la morfologia che si avvicina al mondo animale. E' una sensibilità dove il fascino delle forme scaturisce da quel supposto timore che si produce entrando nel primitivo, il che è come entrare nell'ignoto. Nell'opera di Brunella Longo si avverte il prolungamento nel tempo della manifestazione dell'evento; qualunque cosa potrebbe succedere in qualsiasi momento ma non potendone conoscere il possibile epilogo, l'artista preferisce mantenere l'azione sospesa e spostare il dilemma nella mente dell'osservatore.

Brunella non distorce ciò che vede nella macchina fotografica, sa che la terra ha la forma di una sfera non per il fatto che è stato dimostrato scientificamente ma perché la nostra concezione estetica ed il nostro immaginario lo confermano. È per questo che lo spessore della vegetazione è presente non solamente nelle inquadrature con le grandi profondità di campo ma anche nelle riprese dei piccoli dettagli che fanno risaltare la plasticità dei frammenti. Questo fa sì che la frontality evidenzi il gioco della composi-

work are anchored to the ground as if they wanted to save themselves from a certain cosmic horror. From this anthropologization arises a new unity of life where the divine and the earthly meet.

Brunella Longo feels the Cuban forest with the intuition of someone who knows and perceives everything that happens in it. Her approach is that of the artist who faces an event that stimulates her senses and who from the outset faces a real problem – we would say somewhat phenomenological – which conditions her to arrive at a new solution. Surely her research since she was born, does not depart from what has already been done by the Cuban ethnologist Lidia Cabrera, the author of some of the most important books of our ethnology who saw in “El Monte”, the scenario of all the confluences of Cuban divinities from cults of African origin, syncretized during their insular diaspora with the



L'Altra Parte

zione e che in molti casi la prospettiva come se fosse solo suggerita, rimanga nell'ombra. In alcuni momenti l'intento dell'artista ricorda lo spirito di Wilfredo Lam nella sua opera più importante “La Jungla”. I personaggi di questa grande opera sono ancorati al suolo come se volessero salvarsi da un certo orrore cosmico. Da questa antropologizzazione sorge una nuova unità di vita dove il divino ed il terreno si incontrano.

Brunella Longo sente la foresta cubana con l'intuizione di colui che conosce e percepisce tutto quello che succede in essa. Il suo approccio è quello dell'artista che si affaccia ad un evento che stimola i suoi sensi e che fin da principio affronta un problema reale – diremmo alquanto fenomenologico – che la condiziona per arrivare ad una nuova soluzione. Sicuramente la sua ricerca fin da quando è nata, non si distacca da quanto è già stato fatto dalla etnologa cubana Lidia Cabrera, l'autrice di alcuni libri tra i più importanti della nostra etnologia che ha visto nel “El Monte”, lo scenario di tutte le confluenze delle divinità cubane provenienti dai culti di origine africana, sincretizzati durante la loro diaspora insulare con i santi della religione cattolica. Ed è per questo che “Il Monte” evoca l'iniziatico e fa riferimento in tutti i modi alle nostre origini.

saints of the Catholic religion. Moreover, this is why “Il Monte” evokes the initiatory and refers in every way to our origins. Therefore Longo wants to define her epistemology, delving into what the forest of this country offers her.

From the specificity that characterizes artistic investigation and the elements that are consubstantial with it, Brunella creates her own universe, her procedures can be similar to those that De Chirico applied to architecture, the human figure is subtracted, and his position is ancillary. The artist wants full freedom to imagine the scene before her to be maintained. As in metaphysics, the singular and the universal are complementary. We observe a forest, and yet there is nothing, which can testify that it is in Cuba. We could be in front of any tropical landscape of the Caribbean, with a wink to the Eurocentric colonial and postcolonial gazes; the prejudice of any representation that starts from exoticism or that generates a culture of the tribal can be deduced. Brunella knows that her approach to this world makes her risk seeing herself as another person who needs to redefine herself in a new context.

The way in which a work like “Pre Mundo” emerges also goes back to the great landscapers of the period of colonial power in Cuba. I am thinking of the

Pertanto la Longo vuole definire la sua epistemologia, addentrandosi in quello che la foresta di questo paese le offre.

Dalla specificità che caratterizza l'investigazione artistica e gli elementi che le sono consustanziali, Brunella crea il suo proprio universo, i suoi procedimenti possono essere simili a quelli che applicava De Chirico all'architettura, la figura umana è sottratta, la sua posizione è ancillare. L'artista vuole che sia mantenuta la piena libertà di immaginare la scena che si pone davanti. Come nella metafisica, il singolare e l'universale sono complementari. Osserviamo una foresta, e tuttavia non c'è nulla che possa testimoniare che si trovi a Cuba. Potremmo essere di fronte a qualunque paesaggio tropicale del Caribe, con un ammiccamento agli sguardi eurocentrici coloniali e postcoloniali; se ne desume il pregiudizio di una qualsiasi rappresentazione che parta dall'esotismo o che generi una cultura del tribale. Brunella sa che il suo approccio a questo mondo le fa rischiare di vedere essa stessa come un'altra persona che ha bisogno di ridefinirsi in un nuovo contesto.

La maniera in cui si profila un'opera come “Pre Mundo” risale altresì ai grandi paesaggisti del periodo della potenza coloniale a Cuba. Penso ai due artisti chiave di questa epoca come Esteban Chartrand

two key artists of this era such as Esteban Chartrand and Valentín Sanz Carta. They freed themselves from the European schools to enter the rich and complex range of colors of the Cuban countryside. Understanding the luminosity of this island and the oversaturation of its position at different times and times of the year is a difficult undertaking for any author. Nevertheless, Brunella Longo enters the lights and shadows of the landscape in an exceptional way, controlling very well the shades and excesses, which she slides through his photographs and which never cease to fascinate us because they manage to capture us in an intelligent way. The predilection for the baroque expression of her photographic images is not out of place because their vision manages to totally involve the spectators.

Brunella Longo's works still have elements of contact with the numerous snapshots taken by the Cuban-American artist Ana Mendieta in the places where she performed her performances. Sometimes Ana made the landscape emerge from the photographic development within a process that retained its independence from her performances. Ana Mendieta identified her actions with what she called "Mother Land". She felt the need to return to the earth. In her personal history, she had expe-

e Valentín Sanz Carta. Essi si liberarono dalle scuole europee per entrare nella ricca e complessa gamma dei colori della campagna cubana. Comprendere la luminosità di quest'isola e la sovrassaturazione della sua posizione nelle differenti ore ed epoche dell'anno è un'impresa difficile per qualunque autore, ciò nonostante Brunella Longo si addentra in modo eccezionale nelle luci e nelle ombre del paesaggio, controllando molto bene le tonalità e gli eccessi, che fa scorrere nelle sue fotografie e che non cessano di affascinarci perché riescono a catturarci in maniera intelligente. La predilezione per l'espressione barocca delle sue immagini fotografiche non è fuori luogo perché la loro visione riesce a coinvolgere totalmente gli spettatori.

I lavori di Brunella Longo ancora possiedono elementi di contatto con le numerose istantanee scattate dall'artista cubano-americana Ana Mendieta nei luoghi in cui realizzava le sue performances. A volte Ana faceva emergere il paesaggio dallo sviluppo fotografico all'interno di un processo che conservava la sua indipendenza rispetto alle sue performances. Ana Mendieta identificò le sue azioni con ciò che denominò "Mother Land". Lei sentiva la necessità di ritornare alla terra. Nella sua storia personale aveva vissuto il dramma di essere stata sradicata dal suo paese per



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rienced the drama of being uprooted from her country for political reasons for which her desire was to give something back to nature by integrating with it. Brunella prefers to leave only the image that surprised her, after pressing the shutter of her camera, she does not manipulate, she does not create false beauty. Its roots, its trees breathe. The artist then remains in an apparent distance but we all know that she is here to remind us how far we are with our technological prostheses from a world that exists and that we don't see. These works lead us back to that zero point to assume a new position towards the ecosystem as beings who must consider what the new types of relationships deriving from biopolitics can teach us.

ragioni politiche per cui il suo desiderio era di restituire qualcosa alla natura integrandosi con essa. Brunella preferisce lasciare solo l'immagine che l'ha sorpresa, dopo aver premuto l'otturatore della sua macchina fotografica, non manipola, non crea una bellezza falsa. Le sue radici, i suoi alberi respirano. L'artista allora resta in una apparente distanza ma tutti sappiamo che lei è qui per ricordarci quanto siamo lontani con le nostre protesi tecnologiche da un mondo che esiste e che non vediamo. Queste opere ci riconducono a quel punto zero per assumere una nuova posizione nei confronti dell'ecosistema come esseri che devono considerare ciò che ci possono insegnare i nuovi tipi di relazione derivanti dalla biopolitica.

"A journey of mind and senses, of thoughts and eyes that visit Cuba as if man had never traversed it. Brunella Longo's is a journey of initiatory that charts the strange and the mysterious, the soul and the latent enchanted tale of an island drenched in wonder and in fate. Here the essences, the elements of earth, air and water, have endowed the poetic voice with the sensitivity for a song that wraps the nature, history and imagination of a unique place. A place that demands exacting observers avid for discovery."

"Un viaggio della mente e dei sensi, dà pensieri e di occhi che visitano Cuba come se fosse mai stata attraversata dalla presenza umana. Un viaggio iniziatico quella di Brunella Longo, che registra L'inedito, L'animico, il misterioso, l'affabulazione sempre latente di un'isola piena di sorpresa e di destino, dove le essenze, gli elementi primari dell'aria, della terra, dell'acqua hanno fornito alla voce poetica le valenze sensibili per un canto che avvolge natura, storia e immaginario di un lungo unico che esige osservatori esigenti e avidi di scoperte."

Bruno Corà



ON ARCHITECTURE AND ART WITH NEVZAT SAYIN NEVZAT SAYIN’LA MİMARLIK VE SANAT ÜZERİNE

Interview – Söyleşi / İsmet Değirmenci

In all phases of existence, human –in the causality of body, nature and life– has built a structure for her/himself with the experiences of protection and shelter. This organism has carried the movement and flow of both itself and all its parts to the future in the life cycle of this organism, and each period has evolved by forming its own memory in historical development. The search for the new and the future determined the orientation of architecture with progressive, pioneering and contemporary adjectives.

Communities that moved their rural residences to the city created the following metropolitan cities by demolishing, building and multiplying; ultimately, the designers and creators of the act of building were the architects themselves. Sometimes in their own freedom areas, they have beautified the place we live in and have been accepted with it, by glorifying their creativity with the aesthetic one, and sometimes under the power of political authorities, they have also made crime scene partnerships by deteriorating and uglying both nature and

Varoluşun tüm evrelerinde insan; beden, doğa ve yaşam nedenselliği içinde korunma, barınma deneyimleriyle kendine bir yapı inşa etmiştir. Bu organizmanın yaşamsal döngüsü içinde hem kendinin hem de bütün parçalarının devinim ve akışını geleceğe taşımış ve tarihsel gelişim içinde her dönem kendi hafızasını oluşturarak evrimleşmiştir. Yeni ve gelecek arayışı mimarının ilerici, öncü ve çağdaş sıfatlarla yönelimini belirlemiştir.

Kırsal ikametlerini kente taşıyan topluluklar yıkarak, yaparak, çoğalarak şu metropol kentleri yaratmışlar; nihayetinde inşa eyleminin tasarımcıları ve yaratıcıları mimarların kendileri olmuştur. Bazen kendi özgürlük alanlarında yaratıcılıklarını estetik olanla yücelterek yaşadığımız yeri güzelleştirmiş ve bununla kabul görmüşlerdir. Bazen de siyasi otoritelerin iktidarlığında hem doğa hem şehir yapılarını bozarak hem de çirkinleştirerek suç mahalli ortaklığı da yapmışlardır. Belki de günümüzün en önemli sorunsalı doğaya uyumlu ekosistemi gözetken yeni bir mimari anlayış üretmektir; çağdaş mimari-

ON ARCHITECTURE AND ART WITH NEVZAT SAYIN

city structures. Perhaps the most important problem of today is to produce a new architectural understanding that takes care of the ecosystem compatible with nature. I think this must be the issue of contemporary architecture and art.

Nevzat Sayın; He is one of the most important contemporary representatives of Turkish architecture since the 1990s. Although he says that it is a matter of “finding and doing what is simple, plain, easy, understandable and ‘good’ for everyone”, he always produces his buildings by seeing architecture as an intellectual endeavor in search of something new. In addition to

nin ve sanatın meselesi bu olsa gerek diye düşünüyorum.

Nevzat Sayın; 1990’lardan günümüze Türk mimarlığının en önemli çağdaş temsilcilerindendir. “Basit, sade, kolay, anlaşılır ve herkes için ‘iyi’ olanı bulmak ve yapmak.” Gibi bir meselesi olduğunu söylese de hep bir yeninin arayışı içinde mimarlığı entelektüel bir uğraş olarak görerek, üretir yapılarını. Sanatın tüm disiplinleriyle ilişkide olmasının yanında, sanatçı kimliğiyle de karşımıza çıkan hem bir yazar hem de bir heykeltıraş ve ressamdır.

Politik duruşuyla, eleştirel bakışıyla sorgu-



İsmet Değirmenci - Nevzat Sayın, Photo: Şeref Özen

being in contact with all disciplines of art, he is both a writer, a sculptor and a painter, who also appears as an artist.

A genuine, intellectual and autonomous personality, who questions with his political stance and critical view, produces thoughts on and describes architecture, never gives up on populism, is aware of the historical responsibility of the geography he lives in... Nevzat Sayın shows the modesty to spare time for me amid all that project and production intensity, and we have an effective conversation on architecture, the city, alienation, criticism, education and art.

İsmet Değirmenci: Can we talk about the relationship between geography in the causality process of creating architectural thought and works, and the geography that characterize Nevzat Sayın?

Nevzat Sayın: Since this relationship is not based on formal repetition, it is not very legible, but it is a very active relationship for me. Because I think the best way to learn is 'imitation'. But by imitating the method, not the object. When we imitate the object we arrive at copy, when we imitate the method we arrive at mimesis. What I am after is to grasp the method and thought system of what is happening in this geography, to try to understand it as deeply as possible and to reach a point as to whether there is anything that can be transferred from the

layan, mimarlık üzerine düşünce üreten ve onu anlatan, popülizme asla yüz vermeyen, yaşadığı coğrafyanın tarihsel sorumluluğunun bilincinde, sahici entelektüel ve özerk bir kişilik... Nevzat Sayın tüm o proje ve üretim yoğunluğunun arasında bana zaman ayırma mütevazılığı gösteriyor ve mimarlık, şehir, yabancılaşma, eleştiri, eğitim ve sanat üzerine etkili bir söyleşi gerçekleştiriyoruz.

İ.D: Mimarlık düşünceni ve yapıtlarını oluşturma nedenselliği sürecinde coğrafyanın ya da Nevzat Sayın'ı oluşturan coğrafyanın ilişkisinden söz edebilir miyiz?

N.S: Bu ilişki biçimsel tekrara dayalı olmadığı için çok okunaklı değil ama çok etkin bir ilişkidir benim için. Çünkü öğrenmenin en iyi yolunun 'taklit' olduğunu düşünüyorum. Ama nesneyi değil de yöntemi taklit ederek. Nesneyi taklit ettiğimizde kopyaya, yöntemi taklit ettiğinde mimesise varıyoruz. Peşinde olduğum şey bu coğrafyada olanların yöntemini, düşünce sistematüğini kavramak, öğrendiğince derinden anlamaya çalışmak ve geçmişten bugüne aktarılabilecek bir şey olup olmadığı konusunda bir yere varabilmek. Antik kentleri defalarca tavaf etmemin nedeni de bu. Acaba neydi dertleri? Yunan tiyatrosunun yerin bir parçası olacak şekilde yamaca yerleştirilmesi, Roma tiyatrosunun ise kendi başına bir yapı olarak ortalık yerde oluşu, yönelişleri, inanılmaz akustikler, şehrin içerisindeki konumları; agoranın varlığı ve stoanın ne olduğu, nasıl kullanı-

past to the present. This is the reason why I circumambulate ancient cities many times. What was their problem? The placement of the Greek theatre on the hillside as a part of the ground, the Roman theatre being in the middle as a structure on its own, their orientation, incredible acoustics, their location in the city... When we think about the existence of the agora, what the stoic is and how it is used, one also thinks about how they are transmitted to us and how they can be transferred. For example, when I think about it, I understand better why the order of repetitions interests me so much. The seemingly boring but rhythmic sequential order of things still sounds very impressive to me. These structures occupy a meaningful place in the geography; It is also very important that they take a position relative to the place and to each other.

Miletus and Priene, which are close to each other, sit on a grid plan. Priene is mountainous and hilly; Miletus is a flat place, a port. Moreover, Miletus's grid plan is the urban pattern that also forms the infrastructure of New York. When I first saw it in Priene, being able to sit on these slopes with similar principles, as if stretching a smooth, flat grid to the ground, seemed like a magical skill. The core issues of many of my works are very similar. Where I did the build there are rules that I follow in every building, such as whether the ground is flat or inclined, I try to establish the structure suitable for

dığı gibi meseleleri birbiriyle ilişkilendirerek düşününce, bize nasıl aktarıldıklarını ve aktarılabileceklerini de düşünüyor insan. Mesela, tekrar eden şeylerin düzeninin beni neden bu kadar çok ilgilendirdiğini bunları düşünürken daha iyi anlıyorum. Şeylerin sıkıcı gibi görünen ama bana göre ritmik olan ardışık sıralanışı hâlâ çok etkileyici geliyor. Bu yapıların coğrafyada kendilerine anlamlı bir yer tutmaları; yere ve birbirine göre de pozisyon almaları da ayrıca çok önemli.

Birbirine yakın olan Milet ve Priene de ızgara plana oturuyor. Priene dağlık ve yamaçta; Milet ise düz bir yer, bir liman. Üstelik Milet'in ızgara planı New York'un alt yapısını da oluşturan kentsel kalıp. Priene'de düzgün, düz bir ızgarayı yere göre esnetmişçesine benzer ilkelerle bu yamaçlara oturtabilmek sihirli bir beceri gibi gelmişti ilk gördüğümde. Benim de işlerimin birçoğunun temel meseleleri birbirine çok benziyor. Yapıyı nereye yaptığım; yerin eğik mi düz mü olduğu, en ekonomik açıklığı bularak o açıklığa uygun strüktürü kurmaya ve gerekmedikçe münasebetsiz



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that opening by finding the most economical opening. Moreover, I do not try to cross the inconvenient large openings unless necessary, I do not care about using the limited opportunities at my disposal. I notice that their tracks are very similar to each other. So is permanence. It is important to me and I think that this is one of the main issues of architecture, that what constitutes the main backbone is continuity, and it should be.

İ.D: considering that, the city is a living organism, metropolises that multiply vertically and horizontally and expand their borders, as they are added rise like a problematic pyramid in the reality of socio-economic

büyük açıklıkları geçmeye kalkışmamam, elimdeki sınırlı imkânları kullanmayı önemsemem gibi her yapıda peşinden gittiğim kurallar var. Bunların izlerinin birbirine çok benzediğini fark ediyorum. Kalıcılık da öyle. Benim için önemli ve bunun mimarlığın temel meselelerinden biri olduğunu, asıl omurgayı oluşturan şeyin devamlılık olduğunu, olması gerektiğini düşünüyorum.

İ.D: Şehrin yaşayan bir organizma olduğunu düşünürsek, kendini dikey ve yatay olarak çoğaltan, eklendikçe sınırlarını da genişleten metropoller, sosyo-ekonomik yaşamın gerçekliğinde sorunsal bir piramit gibi yükseliyor. New York'ta gezerken şehrin kendi



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nomic life. While we do not find celestial structures strange in the dynamics of the city while walking around New York, the structures that multiply and rise, like the amoeba we observe and find strange in Istanbul, redefine the identity of the city. Well, what should be the language of the city, how should it redefine itself?

N.S: Under what you do not find strange there and strange here; there is information that, that is New York and this is Istanbul... Again, we come to the question of geography. Narrowing example; can a high-tech structure be built in Turkey? I do not think it can be done; because it has no infrastructure. There is no such producer, such a journeyman, such a worker. However, a structure that looks like high-tech can be made...

High-rise buildings may also associate themselves with the place they are on, the street they are on, or a building in the immediate vicinity. While building a skyscraper on 5th Street in New York, a person who wants to rise as high as possible buys the air right of the parcels next to him, although the parceling order has not changed in our country, the buildings can easily go from 2 floors to 5, 5 to 15, 15 to 30 floors. It is strange that every place behaves as if it is the busiest core of a metropolis. I guess that is what you find strange, and it is something to find strange. For example, Fikirtepe... It is said that 75% of Turkey's population lives in cities.

dinamikleri içinde göksel yapıları yadırgamazken, mesela İstanbul'da şaşkınlıkla gözlediğimiz ve yadırgadığımız amipler gibi çoğalıp yükselen bu yapılar şehir kimliğini yeniden tanımlıyor. Peki, şehrin dili ne olmalı? Kendini yeniden nasıl tanımlamalı?

N.S: Orada yadırgamadığın ve burada yadırgadığın şeyin altında; oranın New York, buranın İstanbul olduğu bilgisi var... Yine coğrafya meselesine geliyoruz. Daraltalım örneği; Türkiye de high-tech bir yapı yapılabilir mi? Bence yapılamaz; çünkü onun alt yapısı yok. Öyle bir yapımcı, öyle bir kalıfa, öyle bir işçi yok. Ancak high-tech gibi görünen bir yapı yapılabilir...

Yüksek yapılar da kendilerini bulundukları yerle, bulundukları caddeyle ya da hemen yakınındaki bir yapıyla ilişkilendiriyor olabilir. New York'ta, 5.cadde üzerinde gökdelen yaparken alabildiğine yükselmek isteyen birinin yanındaki parsellerin hava hakkını satın almasına karşılık bizde parselasyon düzeni değişmediği halde yapılar 2 kattan 5'e, 5'ten 15'e, 15'den 30 kata kadar rahatlıkla çıkabiliyor. Her yerin bir metropolün en yoğun çekirdeğiymiş gibi davranıyor olması tuhaf. Fikirtepe mesela... Sanırım yadırgadığın şey bu ve bu yadırganacak bir şey. Türkiye nüfusunun %75'inin şehirlerde yaşadığı söyleniyor. Bu marifet değil; çünkü bu göç tarım ekonomisini hiçe sayarak kırsal kesimin alışkanlıklarını yok ediyor. Kentin, kentinin alışkanlıklarını da bozuyor. Benim için

This is not ingenuity; because this migration is destroying the habits of the rural people by ignoring the agricultural economy. It also disrupts the habits of the city and its inhabitants. It is confusing for me here. While the village is where people who are alike live, the city is where people who are not alike live. However, in order to make them the same, there is a meaningless effort to make both parts of the city and cities the same in such a way that there is no difference from each other. It is like wanting the impossible, and when it does, it's makeshift. Therefore, it is understandable that you find the tall buildings in Kayışdağı strange because they are not where they should be and they are not as they should be.

İ.D: The effect of alienation, which is one of the problems of the age, is increasing in these vertical structures. Considering the relationship between man and the building, can people live happily in these spaces? Do bad buildings make people unhappy?

N.S: Alienation is a problem everywhere. A child going to kindergarten is picked up from the door by a bus and then taken to the kindergarten. The child enters through the security gate, as in the house where was taken, the service picks the child up again, enters through the security gate and comes home. The student passes through security while entering secondary school, high school and university, and his/her direct

burada karışıyor mesele. Köy birbirine benzeyen insanların yaşadığı yerken şehir birbirine benzemeyen insanların yaşadığı yer. Oysa bunları aynılaştırmak için hem şehrin parçalarının hem de şehirlerin birbirinden farklı kalmayacak şekilde aynılaştırmak için anlamsız bir çaba sürüyor. Bu imkânsız istemek gibi bir şey olur ve olduğunda da iğreti oluyor. Dolayısıyla da senin Kayışdağı'ndaki yüksek yapıları yadırgaman anlaşılır bir şey çünkü hem olmaları gereken yerde değiller hem olması gerektiği gibi değiller.

İ.D: Çağın sorunlarından biri olan yabancılaşmanın bu dikey yapılarda etkisi daha da çoğalıyor. İnsanın yapıyla ilişkisi düşünüldüğünde bu mekânlarda mutlu yaşayabilir mi? Kötü yapılar insanı mutsuz eder mi?

N.S: Yabancılaşma her yerde sorun; anaokuluna başlayan bir çocuğu kapının önünden bir servis alıp anaokuluna götürüyor. Alındığı evde olduğu gibi gittiği yerde de güvenlik kapısından içeri giriyor, servis yeniden onu alıyor, güvenlik kapısından içeri giriyor ve eve geliyor. Ortaokul, lise ve üniversiteye girerken de güvenlikten geçiyor ve olduğu yerle ve kendi çevresiyle doğrudan ilişkisi zedeleniyor. Senin yaşadığın yerde aradıklarıyla onun yaşadığı yerde aradıkları arasında büyük fark var ve birçok insan sen söylemedikçe bunun farkında bile değil.

İ.D: Mimarlık tarihi içinde çok önemli işlerin,

ON ARCHITECTURE AND ART WITH NEVZAT SAYIN

relationship with the place and environment is damaged. There is a big difference between what you are looking for where you live and what their looking for where they lives, and many people do not even realize it unless you tell them.

yapıların var. Bunlardan bazıları Caddebostan Irmak Lisesi, Gön Deri Fabrikası, Shell Merkez binası, Evidea Konutları, Beyaz Ev, Pulver Conta Fabrikası ve Yönetim Binası. Santral İstanbul, Astana Kule, Ataköy Konutları, Mesa Çengelköy Yerleşkesi, Çengeldere Konutları, Berbanmek Evi, Boyacıköy Yöne-



Nar City, Photo: Cemal Emden

İ.D: You have very important works and structures in the history of architecture. Some of these are Caddebostan Irmak High School, Gon Deri Factory, Shell Headquarters, Evidia Residences, White House, Pulver Gasket Factory and Administration Building. Santral Istanbul, Astana Tower, Ataköy Residences, Mesa Çengelköy Campus, Çengeldere Residences, Berbanmek House, Boyacıköy Headquarters, Balparmak Facilities, Umur Printing and Stationery Factory, The Seed Concert Hall, Nar City, Doğan Holding Headquarters, Lapis Han Sabancı Museum Concert Hall, Yahşi Bey Houses... And many structures and prizes that I can't mention. One of them is the colorful Lapis

tim Merkez Binası, Balparmak Tesisleri, Umur Basım ve Kirtasiye Fabrikası, The Seed Konser salonu, Nar City, Doğan Holding Genel Müdürlük Yapısı, Lapis Han Sabancı Müzesi Konser salonu, Yahşi Bey Evleri... Ve sayamadığım birçok yapı ve ödüller. Bunlardan bir tanesi beni şaşırtan renkli Lapis Han Binası. Şehir yaşamı daha çok yetişkinlere göre düzenlenmiş “sanatın entelektüel bir ürün olarak yaşamı bulduğu yer şehir” ve bunları neşelendirmek renklendirmek sanatçıların da işi aynı zamanda ama sen bunu çok iyi becermişsin. Şehrin somurtkan gri yüzünden kurtararak. Nerden çıktı bu renk nasıl bir dil oluşumu?



Yahsibey Houses, Photo: Cemal Emden

Han Building that surprised me. City life that is mostly organized for adults, “the city is where art finds life as an intellectual product” and it is also the duty of the artists to cheer it up and colour it, but you have done it very well. By freeing it from the grey sullen face of the city. Where did this colour come from, what kind of language formation?

N.S: I tend to ask the questions over and over again from the beginning each time. There is nothing in my memory as a solution. I come to a place by asking questions, something like this happened in “colour in architecture”. The colours came out while thinking about how to keep things produced in large numbers and stand together by separating them from each other and to be able to define each one separately. Like punctuation in literature... When someone living in Nar City, which we designed and where there are multiple building groups, asked “How did you decide on this colour issue, why are there these colours?” I asked, “Where do you live?” While describing, “The yellow on the 5th floor, where the green next to that yellow is...” he stopped and said, “I understand.” He was explaining his house with colour vertically and horizontally. You know that the houses you look at are like yours, but still what you look at is something else and what you see when you look the other way; hence the order of repetitive things is defined as colour and actually, the main subject is definition. First, I tried to go

N.S: Her seferinde soruları en baştan bir kere daha sormaya yatkınım. Çözüm olarak ezberimde bir şey yok. Soruları sora sora bir yere geliyorum, mimaride renk de böyle bir şey oldu. Çok sayıda üretilen ve bir arada duran şeylerin birbirinden ayrıştırılarak bir arada tutulmasının ve her birinin ayrıca tanımlanabilmesinin nasıl kurgulanacağını düşünürken çıktı renkler. Edebiyattaki noktalama işaretleri gibi... Bizim tasarladığımız ve çoklu yapı gruplarının olduğu Nar City’de yaşayan biri “bu renk meselesine nasıl karar verdiniz, niye bu renkler var” dediğinde siz nerede oturuyorsunuz dedim. “5’inci Kattaki sarı var ya o sarının yanındaki yeşilin olduğu yerde” derken durdu ve “anladım” dedi... Düşeyde ve yatayda renkle açıklıyordu evini. Baktığın evlerin de senin evin gibi olduğunu biliyorsun ama yine de baktığın şey başka bir şey ve diğer tarafa baktığında gördüğün şey de başka; dolayısıyla tekrar eden şeylerin düzeni renk olarak tanımlı ve aslında konu tanımlamak. Önce sarı, kırmızı, mavi, siyah ve beyaz üzerinden gitmeye çalıştım. Bauhaus’tan öğrendiğim ve sevdiğim tutum renkleri asal halleriyle kullanmak. Fakat o kadar itici buldular ki, “sana değiştir demiyoruz ama bir daha düşün diyoruz” dediler. Mimar Sinan Üniversitesi’nden Ayşegül Kuruç’a ve Bilkent’ten Sibel Ertez’e ulaştım. O sırada uğraştığımız Akbük projesini Ayşegül’le, Nar City meselesini de Sibel’le çalıştık. Adamın bana söylediği şeyi yapmaya çalışıyordum; tanımlanabilir birimler üretmek...

through yellow, red, blue, black and white. What I learned and loved from Bauhaus is to use attitude colours in their prime. But they found it so repulsive that they said, “We are not telling you to change, but we are asking you to think again”. I reached Ayşegül Kuruç from Mimar Sinan University and Sibel Ertez from Bilkent. We worked on the Akbük project with Ayşegül, and on the Nar City issue with Sibel. I was trying to do what the man told me, to produce definable units...

Sibel understood my intention and prepared a wide colour scale. I was very impressed. When I brought it to Tepe Group, they were also impressed and we tried it right away. It must be admitted that there is a knower for everything. It is not enough just to choose yellow, red, blue. Their tone, juxtaposition and how many times they will be repeated are also very important. In architecture, colour is really like punctuation. Working with an expert on color became indispensable when I asked questions such as how things that seemed to repeat indefinitely could be separated from each other, how they could complement each other without repeating, how they could be defined, and how they would cease to be a heap. Even though I prefer the white versions, I felt very comfortable when I learned that antiquity had used color in sculpture... I found a support for myself...

In Lapis Han, it was desired to have a building rising at a single point. However, there

Sibel, niyetimi anlayıp, geniş bir renk skalası hazırladı. Çok etkilendim. Tepe Grubu'na getirdiğimde, onlar da etkilendi ve hemen denedik. Şunu kabul etmek gerekir ki her şeyin bir bileni var. Sadece sarı, kırmızı, mavi seçmek yetmiyor. Tonları, yan yanlıkları, kaç kere tekrarlanacakları da çok önemli. Mimaride renk, gerçekten de noktalama işaretleri gibi. Sonsuz kere tekrar edecekmış gibi duran şeyler birbirlerinden nasıl ayrılır, aynen tekrar etmeden birbirlerini nasıl tamamlayabilir, nasıl tanımlanır, bir yığın olmaktan nasıl çıkarlar gibi soruları arka arkaya sorunca renk konusunda uzmanla çalışmak vazgeçilmez oldu. Her ne kadar beyaz hallerini tercih etsem de antikitenin heykelde renk kullanmış olduğunu öğrendiğimde de içim çok rahat etti... Kendime bir dayanak bulmuştum...

Lapis Han'da, tek noktada yükselen bir yapı olsun isteniyordu. Oysa yüksek yapılarda servis mekânı olan çekirdekle ana mekân arasında bir oran vardır. Bu oranı kaçırırsanız pahalı bir yapı yapmış olursunuz. Çünkü o çekirdek daha büyük bir yere hizmet edecekken daha küçük bir yere hizmet eder. Ve bu yapıda yükselmek bu verimsizliğe yol açacaktı. Yapıyı arsanın sınırlarına kadar, alabildiğine yayarak yapının yüksekliğini değil de genişleterek cüssesini büyütmek iyi bir yol olabilirdi. E5 üzerinde bizden yüksek olan çok sayıda yüksek yapı vardı ve onlarla yükselerek yarışamayacağımız çok açıktı. “100 km hızla giden bir arabadan bile

is a ratio between the core, which is the service space, and the main space in high-rise buildings. If you miss this rate, you will have made an expensive structure. Because that core will serve a smaller place while it would serve a larger place instead. Moreover, rising in this structure would lead to this inefficiency. It would be a good way to increase the size of the building by spreading the building as far as possible, not the height of the building. Many tall structures on the E5 were higher than we were and it was clear that we could not compete with them by ascending. When we said: "A structure that stays in sight even from a car traveling at 100 km speed can be more effective", then my employer said: "I understand and I accept, but can you make blue red? Yes, you are right, 'lapis' is blue that it is our corporate name, but let's not attribute a colour meaning to the name in this structure" then we turned red. What people like is the result of a multitude of mental effort.

İ.D: When we look at the history of art, we come across the designs, paintings and sculptures of some architects. They are extremely effective. For example, Santiago Calatrava's skyscraper, which I saw in Malmö, called "Turing Torso", is perhaps the only vertical structure in the horizontal architecture of northern countries. But in my opinion, we can also look at it as a giant sculpture form outside of the architectural design in the city. Calatrava is also a sculptor,

görüntüye giren bir yapı daha etkili olabilir" dediğimizde, işverenim "anladım ve kabul ediyorum ama maviyi kırmızı yapabilir misiniz? Evet, haklısınız 'lapis' mavidir ama o bizim kurum adımız, bu yapıda isimden renk anlamı yüklemeyelim" dediğinde kırmızıya döndük. İnsanların beğendiği şey zihinsel emek gerektiren, çoklu bir çabanın sonunda oluşuyor.

İ.D: Sanat tarihine baktığımızda bazı mimarların desenleri, resimleri ve heykelleri çıkar karşımıza. Son derece etkili işlerdir. Söz geli mi Malmö'de gördüğüm Santiago Calatrava'nın "Turing Torso" adını verdiği gökdeleni kuzey ülkelerin yatay mimarisi içinde belki de tek dikey yapısıdır. Fakat bana göre buna şehirdeki mimari tasarımın dışında dev bir heykel formu olarak bakabiliriz. Calatrava aynı zamanda bir heykeltıraş, heykel formlarıyla düşünen ve yapıtlar üreten bir mimar. Çoğaltabiliriz bu örnekleri; Le Corbusier, Frank Gehry, Antoni Gaudi, Frank Lloyd Wright, Ming Pei, Zaha Hadid, Cengiz Bektaş vs. Ve sen de geçtiğimiz yıl Ankara da Labirent başlıklı resim ve heykellerinden oluşan bir sergi açtın. Heykellerinden söz etmek isterim; benim dikkatimi çeken heykellerindeki açık alanlar bir bütünlük kaygısı gütmenden, bu açıklık bana başka şeyler de öneriyor. Biraz söz edebilir misin?

N.S: Heykelsi 3 boyutlu nesnelerimi düzgün, dikdörtgen bir levhayı çeşitli yerlerinden kesip parçalara ayırıp sonra o parçaları belir-

an architect who thinks in sculptural forms and produces works of art. We can multiply these examples; Le Corbusier, Frank Gehry, Antoni Gaudi, Frank Lloyd Wright, Ming Pei, Zaha Hadid, Cengiz Bektaş etc. You opened an exhibition of your paintings and sculptures titled Labyrinth in Ankara last year. I would like to talk about your sculptures. The open spaces in his sculptures that caught my attention –without any concern for integrity– this openness suggests other things to me as well. Can you talk a little bit?

N.S: I make my sculptural interior dimensional objects by cutting a smooth, rectangular plate into pieces from various parts,

li bir düzende birleştirerek yapıyorum ama ne bir parça ekliyorum bu levhadan aldığım parçaların dışında ne de bir parça atıyorum. Parçaları koparıp önceki yerlerine koyarsak saç levhayı yeniden ve eksiksiz olarak oluşturabiliriz.

İ.D: Ben de bunu gözümle tamamlayabiliyorum, işte o yüzden farklı bakabilmekten söz ediyorum. Aynı zamanda düşünsel olanı da katmak hep bir derinlik felsefesi ve nedensellik üzerinden tanımlayabiliyorsun.

N.S: Sanatçılarla mimarları ayıran şey açıklanabilir ve anlaşılabilir nedensellikler olmalı. Mimaride daha işe başlamadan herkes için



Nevzat Sayın, Photo: Şeref Özen

and then combining those pieces in a certain order. Nevertheless, I am not adding a piece other than the pieces I took from this plate, nor am I throwing a piece away. If we tear off the pieces and put them back in their previous places, we can reconstruct the sheet metal completely as it was first.

İ.D: I can also complete this with my eyes, that's why I'm talking about being able to look at it differently. At the same time, adding the intellectual... You can always define it through a philosophy of depth and causality.

N.S: Maybe this is due to being an architect. Explainable and understandable causality must be what separates artists from architects. Before starting to work in architecture, it is necessary to be convincing for everyone and to ensure the mental participation of others in this matter. However, art does not have to be convincing or believable. The persuasion process and the issue of capturing the common denominator is a very important difference. It is like putting the pieces together in the sculpture without discarding anything and adding nothing. The process of persuading others becomes much easier when I bring the causalities together in a coherent and convincing way. I cannot sell anything I do not believe in. I sincerely have to believe that it is exactly what it is supposed to be.

İ.D: Architect sketches (?).

ikna edici olmak ve başkalarının da bu konuda zihinsel katılımını sağlamak gerekiyor. Oysa sanat ne ikna edici olmak ne de inandırıcı olmak zorunda. İkna edicilik süreci ve ortak paydayı yakalama meselesi çok önemli bir farklılık. Heykelde hiçbir şey atmadan ve hiçbir şey eklemekten parçaları birleştirmem gibi. Nedensellikleri kendi içinde tutarlı olarak inandırıcı bir biçimde bir araya getirdiğimde başkalarının ikna süreci çok daha kolay oluyor. İnanmadığım hiçbir şeyi satamam. Samimi olarak onun tam da olması gereken şey olduğuna inanmam gerekir.

İ.D: Mimarların desenleri...

N.S: Elle zihin arasında organik bir ilişki var ve düşünce doğrudan parmağın ucuna geçiyor neredeyse. Bu yüzden hangi kalemi kullandığın, hangi kâğıda yazıp çizdiğin çok önemli ve kullandıkça da aşamalı olarak geliyor düşündükleriyle çizdiklerin arasındaki ilişki. Bilgisayarda ise, henüz zihinde bitmeden bilgisayar ortamında onu bitmiş gibi görüyoruz ve düşünmek yerine bir bilgisayar operatörüne dönüşüyoruz. Tasarımcı olmaktan çıkıyoruz. Oysa eli kullanarak, kırk dökük de olsa kâğıda kalemle çizdiğinde o şey yanılısama olmuyor hakiki bir şeyin tasvirine dönüşüyor. Bilgisayarı da öyle kullanan vardır mutlaka ama ben rastlamadım. Ekrandaki görüntünün büyümesine kapılıp, düşünmek yerine yapmaya geçmek daha yaygın bir davranış.

N.S: There is an organic relationship between the hand and the mind, and the thought almost comes directly to the tip of the finger. That is why it is very important which pen you use, on which paper you write and draw, and the relationship between what you think and what you draw gradually develops as you use it. In the computer, we see it as if it is finished in the computer environment before it is finished in our mind, and instead of thinking, we turn into a computer operator. We cease to be designers. However, when you draw with a pen on paper, even

İ.D: Sanat merkezlerinin, sergileme alanlarının, müze ve galerilerin yeni yeni dönüşmeye başladığını görüyoruz. Bulundukları bildik mekânların dışına çıkma eğilimi söz konusu; sanatın daha yenilikçi ve disiplinler arası ilişkilerini de düşünürsek nasıl buluyorsun bu yeni alan arayışlarını?

N.S: Galerilere ilişkin ya da daha geniş anlamıyla sanat mekânlarına ilişkin bir şeyler değişti; müzayedeler galeri gibi çalışılmaya başladı. Genç bir sanatçının yeni bir işi de müzayedeye çıkıyor ve tuhaf rakamlara



Nevzat Sayın, Photo: Şeref Özen

if it is broken, using your hand, that thing is not an illusion; it turns into a description of something real. There must be people who use the computer like that, but I have not come across them. It is more common to be fascinated by the image on the screen and switch to doing rather than thinking.

İ.D: We see that art centers, exhibition areas, museums and galleries are just beginning to transform. There is a tendency to go out of their familiar places; considering the more innovative and interdisciplinary relations of art, how do you find these new field searches?

satılıyor ve oradan geri dönülemediği için birçok sanatçı kaybolup gidiyor. Galeriler de müze gibi olmaya başladı. Mesela Dolapdere'ye inip, Arter'e, Dirimart'a, Evliyagil'e uğrayıp, Piyalepaşa'ya uzandığında kentin içine yayılmış bir müze gezmiş gibi oluyorsun. Müzelerin konumu da ilginç. Müzeler de lokantaları, barları, kafeteryaları, hediyelik eşya satış yerleriyle başka bir faza geçtiler. Bunların hepsini bir arada değerlendiren galerilerin bugünkü varlığı da çok önemli geliyor; çünkü eğer olması gerektiği gibi çalışıyorlarsa, sanatla iç içe olan bir sahip o sahiple dirsek temasını koruyan bir küratör, sergilemeyi yapan bir tasarımcı



Nevzat Sayin, view from exhibition

N.S: Something about galleries or more broadly about art spaces has changed; auctions began to work like galleries. A new work by a young artist is also presented at auctions and sold for strange numbers and many artists disappear because there is no return. Galleries began to be like museums. For example, when you go down to Dolapdere, stop by Arter, Dirimart, Evliyagil, and reach Piyalepaşa, it's like visiting a museum spread throughout the city. The location of the museums is also interesting. Museums within restaurants, bars, cafeterias and gift shops have also entered another phase. Considering all these together, the existence of the galleries today is also very important. Because if they work as they should, a good thing comes out when they manage to establish good relations with the artists thanks to an owner who is in touch with art, a curator who keeps elbow contact with that owner, a designer who makes the exhibition. Galeri Nev is one of the oldest and I think it handles these relationships well. Meşher is a completely different place. Dirimart is doing something important with Canan Tolon, İnci Eviner, Ayşe Erkmen, Sarkis, Komet and Seçkin. I think it is a process where galleries are good. Good and effective. Better not to say anything about the fairs...

İ.D: On the other hand, the dynamics of the neo-liberal system within the art market are also in question. An audience is formed that glorifies neat, clean, ornamental, pseu-

sayesinde sanatçılarla doğru dürüst ilişkiler kotarmayı becerdiklerinde iyi bir şey çıkıyor ortaya. Galeri Nev en eskilerden biri ve ben de iyi hallediyor bu ilişkileri. Meşher bambaşka iyi bir yer. Dirimart ise Canan Tolon, İnci Eviner, Ayşe Erkmen, Sarkis, Komet ve Seçkin'le önemli bir şey yapıyor. Galerilerin iyi olduğu bir evre olduğunu düşünüyorum. İyi ve etkin. Fuarlar için bir şey demesem daha iyi...

İ.D: Diğer taraftan neo-liberal sistemin sanat pazarı içindeki dinamikleri de söz konusu... Düzgün, temiz, süslemeci, pseudo-burjuva estetiğini yücelten bir beğeni kitlesi oluşuyor. Eleştirinin yerine sergi yazıları ve övgüler değer kazanıyor. Mimarlıkla ilgili söyleşilerinde eleştirinin çok önemli olduğunu söylüyorsunuz. Gerçek anlamda eleştiri var mı?

N.S: Biraz önce galerilerden söz ederken küratörün ve eleştirmenin varlığı çok önemli demiştim. Uzun süredir, bir sergi, bir sanat yapıtı üzerinden çok az eleştiri var; daha çok genel değerlendirmelerle geçiştiriliyor. Bizim yapma biçimimiz farklı olduğu için nedensellikler çok açık ortada. Onları tutturamadığımızda, iyi şeyler öneremediğinde eleştirecek çok şeyler çıkıyor ama mimarlık eleştirisi de çok eksik.

İ.D: Bir de en önemli meselelerimizden biri eğitim. Yeni yeni Üniversiteler, sanat fakülteleri, mimarlık okulları açılıyor. Bu görünen

do-bourgeois aesthetics. Instead of criticism, exhibition articles and praise gain value. In your conversations about architecture, you say that criticism is very important. Is there any real criticism?

N.S: While talking about galleries, I said that the presence of the curator and critic is very important. For a long time, there has been very little criticism over an exhibition, a work of art; it is mostly passed over with general evaluations. Because our way of doing it is different, the causality is obvious. There is much to criticize when we fail to meet them, when good things are not offered but the criticism of architecture is also very lacking.

İ.D: One of our most important issues is education. New universities, art faculties, architecture schools are opening. How does this apparent quantity affect the quality of education?

N.S: I recently learned that there are 180 schools of architecture. I was at 135. There isn't enough academic staff, infrastructure or program to support this. Moreover, since there are no different architecture schools in Turkey, they all try to implement the same program. Therefore, the good ones go down while the bad ones go up. Architecture faculties are unaware of what's going on in their region. No one has seen Hierapolis, but students are working on a cultural center project in Denizli... I don't know how it could be;

nicelik, eğitimin niteliğini nasıl etkiliyor?

N.S: 180 mimarlık okulu olduğunu öğrendim geçenlerde. Ben 135'te kalmıştım. Ne bunu destekleyecek kadar akademik kadro ne altyapı ne de program var. Üstelik Türkiye'de birbirinden farklı mimarlık okulları olmadığı için hepsi aynı programı uygulamaya çalışıyor. Ve böylelikle kötüler yukarı doğru çıkarken iyiler aşağı doğru iniyor. Mimarlık fakültelerinin kendi bölgelerinde olup bitenden haberi yok. Hierapolis'i kimse görmemiş ama Denizli'de bir kültür merkezi projesiyle uğraşıyor öğrenciler... Nasıl olabileceğini bilmiyorum; olmuyor da zaten, 1980 Eylülünden beri bu program yürüyor. Zannediliyordu ve hâlâ zannediliyor ki gençler apolitik olunca derslerine yoğunlaşacak, çok saçma. Politika dediğimiz şey ne ki?

Bugünden memnun değilsin ve hayatın başka türlü olmasının mümkün olduğunu biliyorsun. Böyle düşünen insanlarla bir araya geliyor, bir gelecek tasavvuru oluşturuyor ve bunun için mücadele ediyor-sun. Bu şahane bir tasarım problemi; yani geleceğe dair bir fikrin var ve bunu nasıl yapılacağını, gerçekleştirileceğini kuruyorsun. Bundan daha iyi bir tasarım problemi olabilir mi? 20 yaşlarında olan gençlerin elinden bunu alıyorsun ve bunun yerine hiçbir şey koymuyorsun ki koyulamaz zaten. Uyku gibi, başka bir şeyle ikame edilmesi imkânsız olan bir gerekliliktir politik olmak. Bence bu eksiklik çok önemli bir kavrukluk üretiyor.

it doesn't happen anyway; This program has been running since September 1980. It was thought and still think that when young people become apolitical, they will concentrate on their studies, it is ridiculous. What is called policy?

You are not satisfied with the present and you know it is possible for life to be otherwise. You come together with people who think like this, create a vision of the future and fight for it. This is a fantastic design problem; that is, you have an idea of the future and you are establishing how to do it, to realize it. Could there be a better design problem than this? You take this away from young people who are in their 20s, and you don't put anything in its place, which can't be replaced anyway. Being political is a necessity, like sleep, which cannot be replaced by anything else. I think this deficiency produces a very important scorch. Yes, all kinds of information are easily accessible, but how will you know which one of them is relevant to your issue if you do not have a specific context and specific engagement? There is an absurd waste of time in architectural education. Everything is left to the student.

I believe that personal struggle is meaningful and valuable; but the person cannot establish what we call the environment on his own, he cannot afford it. There is a big difference between being in a good environment prepared for someone by others

Evet, her türlü bilgiye kolaylıkla ulaşılabilir ama ulaştıklarından hangisinin senin meselele ilgili olduğunu belirli bir bağlaman ve belirli angajmanın yoksa nasıl anlayacaksın? Saçma sapan bir savrulukluk var mimarlık eğitiminde. Her şey kendisine kalıyor öğrencinin.

Kişisel mücadelenin anlamlı ve kıymetli olduğuna inanıyorum; ama ortam dediğimiz şeyi kişi kendi başına kuramaz, buna gücü yetmez. Başkaları tarafından onun için hazırlanmış iyi bir ortamın içerisindeki haliyle her şeyin kendine kaldığı bir yerdeki hali arasında büyük bir fark var. Eğitim modeli olarak senin dediğin gibi muhafazakâr eğitimin bütün evrelerindeki öğrencilerin olma



Atina, Photo: Nevzat Sayın

and being in a place where everything is left to oneself. As you say, as an education model, what can happen in the university where students from all stages of conservative education come to be? The education issue has been emptied.

İ.D: I want to talk about Yahşi Bey Houses. We observe that the awareness of nature, which is much discussed after the pandemic, and the stoa philosophy that recommends a life in harmony with nature, is also discussed, and will be discussed and discussed a lot on re-examining one's life. What was the issue and effect of these structures that you built in the nature in two villages?

N.S: Again, the issue comes to the environment you are in; when we know the geography well, it is easier to deal with the problem. You can do what you want and what the place wants. Rafeal Moneo calls it “the whisper of the ground.” I guess this is what we did at Yahşi Bey; looking at what was formed and made before us... That's why it's important what that villager told me; “You built a house like our rooftops, but you still made something different”. Was a good this remark. What we set from the beginning with Emre Senan was to disappear and not be seen but to make a difference that only the careful eye can see. I think we succeeded.

haliyle geldikleri üniversitede ne olabilir ki? İçi boşaltılmış durumda eğitim meselesi.

İ.D: Yahşi Bey Evlerinden söz etmek istiyorum. Pandemi sonrası çok tartışılan doğanın farkındalığı, doğayla uyumlu yaşamı öneren stoa felsefesinin de konuşulduğu, hayatını yeniden gözden geçirme üzerine çokça tartışıldığı ve tartışılacağını gözlüyoruz. Sizin doğa içine iki köyde yaptığınız bu yapıların meselesi ve etkisi neydi?

N.S: Yine iş geliyor içinde bulunduğun çevreye; coğrafyayı iyi tanıdığımız zaman sorunla başa çıkmamız daha kolay oluyor. Hem kendi istediğinizi hem de yerin istediğini yapabiliyorsunuz. Ve bu iyi bir bileşke. Biraz sakinleşip dinlediğimizde çevre bir şeyler fısıldıyor. Rafeal Moneo buna “yerin fısıltısı” der. Biraz dinleyip, teslim olmayı iyi bir tasarım kriteri olarak kabul etsek, bizden önce var olan, yapılmış ve oluşmuş olanları anlamaya çalışsak biraz önce konuştuğumuz mimesis meselesinde olduğu gibi yapacağımız şeylerin ipuçlarını görebiliriz. Yahşi Bey'de becerdiğimiz bu galiba; bizden önce oluşmuş ve yapılmış olanlara bakmak... Bu yüzden o köylünün bana söylediği önemli; “yapa yapa bizim damlar gibi ev yaptın, ama yine de farklı bir şey yaptın”. O kadar iyi ki bu bakış. Emre Senan'la baştan koyduğumuz şey kaybolmak ve görünmemek, ancak dikkatli gözün görebileceği bir farklılık yaratmaktı. Sanırım becerdik.



Arkin University
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THE NEW IS ANCIENT: UMIT INATCI AND BEHZAD YAHAGHI IL NUOVO È ANTICO: UMIT INATCI E BEHZAD YAHAGHI

Bruno Corà

The oxymoron with which this exhibition was entitled “The new is ancient: Umit Inatci and Behzad Yahaghi” is justified for more than one reason. First of all because the two artists boast origins and belonging to millenary and highly prestigious cultures, such as the Cypriot Mediterranean island and the Persian Middle Eastern respectively, rich in history and art with which Europe and its countries have had vicissitudes and events in different eras shared. Secondly, to be such, every novelty needs a term of comparison, something from which to come in order to differentiate itself and in any case presume to be able to leave behind every previous cognitive and expressive aspect. In short, this means offering a vision of the present that is different from the past and propositional for a future. Nonetheless, if “the new is ancient” this would coincide with that famous passage from the biblical Qolet, which stated “nihil sub sole novum” (nothing under the sun is new).

L'ossimoro con cui è stata intitolata questa mostra “Il nuovo è antico: Umit Inatci e Behzad Yahaghi” si giustifica per più di una ragione. Anzitutto poiché i due artisti vantano origini e appartenenze a culture millenarie e di grande prestigio, come rispettivamente quella insulare mediterranea cipriota e quella mediorientale persiana, ricche di storia e di arte con cui l'Europa e i suoi paesi hanno avuto in diverse epoche vicende e avvenimenti condivisi. In secondo luogo, ogni novità per essere tale ha bisogno di un termine di confronto, qualcosa da cui provenire per differenziarsi e comunque presumere di potersi lasciare alle proprie spalle ogni precedente aspetto cognitivo ed espressivo. In breve, ciò significa offrire una visione del presente diversa dal passato e propositiva di un futuro. Nondimeno, se “il nuovo è antico” ciò coinciderebbe con quel celebre passo del Qolet biblico che affermava “nihil sub sole novum” (niente sotto il sole è nuovo).

But the fact that the new is considered ancient in this circumstance of an artistic type, also means that the 'new' in question –the one brought by the art of the two artists whose works on display in this exhibition can be appreciated– has solid foundations and enduring values that go beyond the 'fashions' and 'tastes' of a single cultural phase, binding themselves more widely to a more extended time.

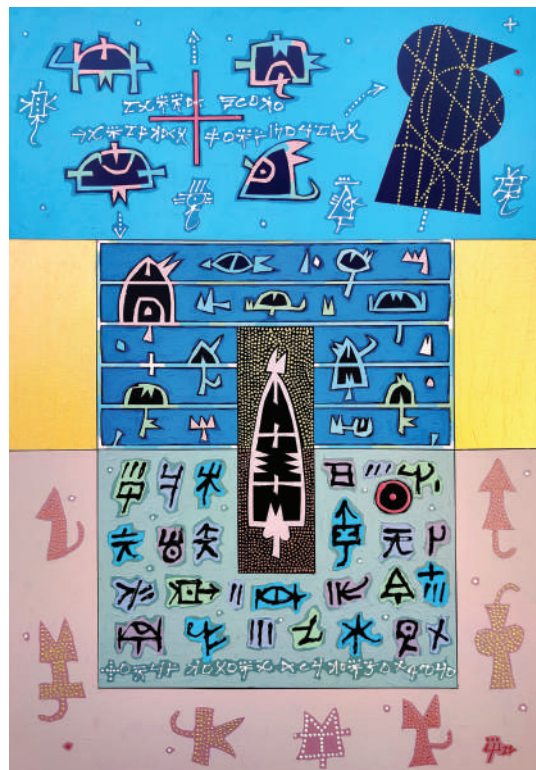
And if the biographies and related journeys made up to now weren't already eloquent proof of their valid work, once again this Atina exhibition episode will serve to demonstrate the original contribution made by each of them to the development of contemporary visual language.

I followed the early youth of Umit Inatci and Behzad Yahaghi, when the two artists prepared and refined their different ways of doing painting and art in Italy and in other countries with a complexity of aesthetic, poetic and technical tools that already suggested the different needs cultivated in their souls.

Inatci at the painting school of Nuvolo (Giorgio Ascani) and Antonio Gatto, at the Academy of Fine Arts in Perugia, he stood out for his visual linguistic project already in those eighties built using

Ma il fatto che il nuovo si ritenga antico, in questa circostanza di tipo artistico, significa altresì che il 'nuovo' in questione, quello recato dall'arte dei due artisti di cui si possono apprezzare le opere esposte in questa mostra, ha solide fondamenta e durevoli valori che oltrepassano le 'mode' e i 'gusti' di una sola fase culturale, vincolandosi più ampiamente a un tempo maggiormente esteso.

E se le biografie e i relativi percorsi compiuti sino ad oggi non fossero già eloquenti prove del loro valido operare, una volta in più questo episodio espositivo di Atina servirà a dimostrare l'o-



Ümit İnâtçı, Hermaphrodite, Acrylic on canvas 100X70 cm.

morphemes, diversified chromatic fields and improbable geometries. However evocative of alphabetical, vegetable, mineral, animal structures referring to a nature that had already transformed itself into paleographic culture, capable of defining an ideogrammatic and iconographic system from one painting to another that aroused thoughts in the observer capable of discovering the origin, the deep source from which that strongly imaginary universe of signs could come. If his alphabets were the result of invention, such were not the deposits of objective cultural sediment of which İnatçı became a dowsing trou-

riginale contributo recato da ognuno di loro agli sviluppi del linguaggio visivo contemporaneo.

Di Umit İnatçı e di Behzad Yahaghi ho seguito gli esordi giovanili, quando i due artisti preparavano e affinavano in Italia e in altri paesi le loro diverse modalità di fare pittura e arte con una complessità di strumenti estetici, poetici e di tipo tecnico che già suggeriva le diverse esigenze coltivate nel loro animo.

İnatçı alla scuola di pittura di Nuvo-
lo (Giorgio Ascani) e di Antonio Gatto, presso l'Accademia di Belle Arti di Perugia, si distingueva per il suo progetto linguistico visivo già in quegli anni Ottanta costruito mediante morfemi, campi cromatici diversificati e di geometrie improbabili, per quanto evocative di strutture alfabetiche, vegetali, minerali, animali riferite a una natura già trasformata in cultura paleografica, capace di definire da un dipinto all'altro un sistema ideogrammatico e iconografico che suscitava pensieri nell'osservatore atti a scoprire l'origine, la profonda sorgente da cui quell'universo di segni, fortemente immaginario, potesse provenire. Se i suoi alfabeti erano frutto di invenzione, tali non erano i giacimenti di oggettivo sedimento culturale di cui İnatçı si rendeva raddomantico trovatore. Ma quella sua sensibilità si alimentava



Ümit İnatçı, Metanoia, Acrylic on canvas 100X70 cm.

badour. But that sensitivity of his was nourished and continues to be nourished still through a dynamo of energy obtained from an anthropological poetic sentiment of such intensity as to endow him not only with the capacity for mythical-magical visualization, with a critical and poetic voice, with a humanistic and social conscience, with civil and cultural responsibility.

Inatçı's journey, through the years and the experiences he has made, has become complex, reaching an artistic maturity that the space available in this document does not allow for a complete analysis. In summary, it can be said that his painting has become, from phase to phase, a source of plasticity where morphemes have become physical and plastic emblems, where the mythical has declined into alchemical and poetic and where the signs conceived have become material with self-expressive properties starting from their experience of significant and meaningful 'things'.

In this circumstance, it is enough for the observer of his works to reflect on these statements of his: "I consider myself a topiary gardener who works with perception. My gardens are utopian places where the plants and the organic beings that crowd them feed on a cosmic energy (...) a chaotic order, which however

e continua ad alimentarsi ancora attraverso una dinamo di energia ricavata da un sentimento poetico antropologico di tale intensità da dotarlo oltre che di capacità di visualizzazione mitico-magiche, di voce critica e poetica, di coscienza umanistica e sociale, di responsabilità civile e culturale.

Il cammino di Inatçı, attraverso gli anni e le esperienze compiute, è divenuto complesso, raggiungendo una maturità artistica che lo spazio a disposizione in questo documento non consente di analizzare compiutamente. Si può affermare in sintesi che la sua pittura è divenuta, di fase in fase, fonte di una plasticità dove i morfemi sono divenuti emblemi fisici e plastici, dove il mitico si è declinato in alchemico e in poetico e dove i segni ideati sono divenuti materiali con proprietà auto espressive a partire dal loro vissuto di 'cose' significanti e significative.

Basti in questa circostanza all'osservatore dei suoi lavori riflettere su queste sue affermazioni: "Mi considero un giardiniere topiario che lavora con la percezione. I miei giardini sono luoghi utopici dove le piante e gli esseri organici che li affollano si alimentano da un'energia cosmica (...) un ordine caotico che però si presenta come una geometria assoluta. L'armonia dell'imperfezione, un'anti-

presents itself as an absolute geometry. The harmony of imperfection, a fruitful antinomy, divergences that reconcile impossible coexistences (...) I am the primitive of the future”.

The path taken by Behzad Yahaghi is another. Even if his steps took him to the same places as that Academy of Perugia, in the Scenography courses, to attend the same youth identities in the process of artistic training, the same teachers, the same classrooms as Inatçı, Yahaghi nonetheless had behind him a

nomia feconda, divergenze che riconciliano impossibili coesistenze (...) Sono il primitivo del futuro”.

Altra è la strada percorsa da Behzad Yahaghi. Anche se i suoi passi lo hanno portato negli stessi luoghi di quella Accademia di Perugia, nei corsi di Scenografia, a frequentare le stesse identità giovanili in via di formazione artistica, gli stessi docenti, le stesse aule di Inatçı, Yahaghi tuttavia aveva alle spalle una cultura musicale a causa di un padre musicista professionista maestro degli strumenti ad arco persiani, kamancheh e violino, e una sincera volontà di coniugare con il proprio lavoro la cultura storica e artistica italiana antica e moderna con quella persiana. Dotato di una manualità particolare e di un'attitudine alla sperimentazione riguardante il rapporto tra mezzi operativi e supporti, Yahaghi si mostra portato a verifiche delle reazioni materiche (ad esempio liquidi acrilici su carte lucide o inchiostri su carte bagnate, etc.) che tuttavia seguono un intuitivo processo che porta con frequenza a una vera propria ‘illuminazione’ poetica; in queste epifanie si manifestano forme di cui Yahaghi individua l'origine profonda, inconscia ma subito veicolata dalla sensibilità verso ambiti di elaborazione e ricerca riguardante gli archetipi e l'abissale sede dei ‘primordi’ umani e cosmici.

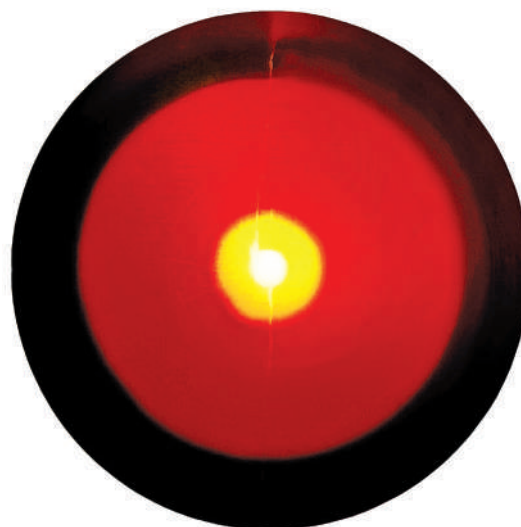


Behzad Yahaghi, Cerchio Timido, Acrylic on canvas 2014
80x120 cm.

musical culture due to a father who was a professional musician and master of Persian stringed instruments, kamancheh and violin, and a sincere desire to combine ancient and modern Italian historical and artistic culture with the Persian one with his work. Equipped with a particular dexterity and an aptitude for experimentation regarding the relationship between operating means and supports, Yahaghi shows himself inclined to verify the material reactions (for example acrylic liquids on glossy papers or inks on wet papers, etc.) which however follow an intuitive process that frequently leads to a real poetic 'enlightenment'. Forms manifest in these epiphanies whose deep origin Yahaghi identifies, unconscious but immediately conveyed by sensitivity towards areas of elaboration and research concerning archetypes and the abysmal seat of the human and cosmic 'primordials'.

It is these imaginary typologies that provide Yahaghi with the titles of his works all aimed at arousing the poetic and spiritual feeling of immateriality, of sonority and of forms such as circularity, synonymous with completeness on which I have already expressed myself elsewhere, various years ago. Yahaghi's research is a vocation to the entity of the total work of art, in which form, space, sonority, perception and other entities

Sono queste tipologie immaginarie che forniscono a Yahaghi i titoli delle sue opere, tutte rivolte a suscitare il sentimento poetico e spirituale dell'immaterialità, della sonorità e di forme come la circolarità, sinonimo di completezza su cui già mi sono espresso in altra sede, diversi anni fa. La ricerca di Yahaghi è vocazione all'entità dell'opera d'arte totale, in cui forma, spazio, sonorità, percezione e altre entità sono convocate nell'elaborazione dell'opera recante il denominatore comune ambito dell'armonia. Sole di Mezzanotte, Graal, Il verbo, Cerchio rosso, Contrasti sono tutte opere opere spesso di grandi dimensioni che dal 1999 ad oggi sono venute alla luce evidenziando un immaginario



Behzad Yahaghi, Cerchio Rosso, Acrylic on canvas 2014
300x200 cm.

THE NEW IS ANCIENT: Ümit İnatçı and Behzad Yahaghi

are summoned in the elaboration of the work bearing the common denominator of harmony. Midnight Sun, Graal, The Verb, Red Circle, Contrasti are all works often of large dimensions which have come to light since 1999, highlighting an imaginary aimed at the sublime, the ecstatic and the indefinable, which only the image and music are able to communicate. As in music the pauses, so in the image the void plays an essential role and in Yahaghi's paintings the void is the magnet that attracts the overall perception of the work. In this sense, the gaze that moves from the heart of the void towards the color of the circularity that defines it, must also perform the act of moving virtually with thought, from the perceived surrounding reality, to the inner space to be discovered.

rivolto al sublime, all'estatico e all'indeterminabile, che solo l'immagine e la musica sono in grado di comunicare. Come nella musica le pause, così nell'immagine il vuoto gioca un ruolo essenziale e nei dipinti di Yahaghi il vuoto è il magnete che attrae la percezione complessiva dell'opera. In tal senso, lo sguardo che dal cuore del vuoto si sposta verso il colore della circolarità che lo definisce, deve compiere anche l'atto di spostarsi virtualmente con il pensiero, dalla realtà circostante percepita, allo spazio interiore da scoprire.

Dicembre 2022

Exhibition curated by Anna Cautilli
Palazzo Ducale Atina (FR)/ Italy
December 2022 – January 2023



Palazzo Ducale - Atina

ABOUT “MORE OR LESS” EXHIBITION “AZ ÇOK” SERGİSİ ÜZERİNE

Emre Zeytinoğlu

The exhibition titled “More or Less”, an organization of Ümit İnatçı Art Center, met with the audience at İsmet Vehit Güney Exhibition Hall in Nicosia between 15 - 23 September. The venue of the exhibition, which includes Carlo Carnevali, Sümer Erek, İsmet Değirmenci, Ümit İnatçı, Demetra Kokkinou and Emre Zeytinoğlu, stands out in Nicosia's cultural life as much as the exhibition itself. This structure, which does not have the status of a historical monument, but is protected as a cultural value, forms a part of the warehouses of the railway company during the British rule. In the sources, it is written that the warehouses built in 1905 were used with similar functions after 1974 and were transformed into an art center since 2009.

Also, the name of this art center should be mentioned. İsmet Vehit Güney is known as a Cypriot painter who worked with İbrahim Çallı in his youth; opened his first solo exhibition in 1947 and later held many solo and group exhibitions. How-

Ümit İnatçı Sanat Merkezi'nin bir organizasyonu olan “Az Çok” adlı sergi 15 - 23 Eylül arasında, Lefkoşa'daki İsmet Vehit Güney Sergi Salonu'nda izleyicilerle buluştu. Carlo Carnevali, Sümer Erek, İsmet Değirmenci, Ümit İnatçı, Demetra Kokkinou ve Emre Zeytinoğlu'nun yer aldığı söz konusu serginin açıldığı mekân da en az serginin kendisi kadar Lefkoşa'nın kültür yaşamı içinde öne çıkıyor. Tarihi eser statüsünde olmayan, ama kültürel bir değer olarak korunan bu yapı, İngiliz egemenliği dönemindeki demiryolu şirketi ambarlarının bir bölümünü oluşturuyor. Kaynaklarda, 1905 yılında inşa



E. Zeytinoğlu, D. Kokkinou, İ. Değirmenci, Ü. İnatçı

ABOUT "MORE OR LESS" EXHIBITION

ever, his best-known work is the flag of the Republic of Cyprus, which was founded in 1960, which is still approved in the international diplomatic arena as the "Cyprus flag". The heavy responsibility of holding an exhibition in such a place, both as a historical value and as a reference to its name, is of course indisputable. However, apart from these, it should be said that the main difficulty arises from the narrowness of the possibilities of exhibiting works in a historical place.

Ümit İnataç stated in a television speech that he thought the following when determining the title of the exhibition "More or less": "In an area where art and cultural values are pushed back, no matter how much effort is made for them, it all means 'to do something more or less'." These words, in a way, have a grain

edilen ambarların, 1974 yılından sonra da yine benzer işlevler ile kullanıldığı, 2009 yılından itibaren ise bir sanat merkezine dönüştürüldüğü yazılıyor.

Ayrıca, bu sanat merkezinin adından da söz etmek gerekir. İsmet Vehit Güney, gençliğinde İbrahim Çallı ile çalışan ve 1947 yılında ilk kişisel sergisini açan, sonradan da pek çok kişisel ve karma sergiye imza atan Kıbrıslı bir ressam olarak tanınıyor. Ne var ki onun en çok bilinen eseri 1960 yılında kurulan Kıbrıs Cumhuriyeti'nin bayrağıdır ki bu, günümüzde de "Kıbrıs bayrağı" olarak, uluslararası diplomatik alanda onaylanıyor.

Hem tarihsel bir değer olarak hem de adının referansı olarak, böyle bir mekânda bir sergi gerçekleştirmenin ağır sorumluluğu elbette tartışılmaz. Ancak bunlardan ayrı



Emre Zeytinoğlu, (about topos-logos & memory) 8x35x25 cm.

of truth; It is known that such organizations are the occasion of a political meeting, popular demonstrations, football matches, etc. unable to reach large audiences; because the language in these organizations is not like them. However, throughout the exhibition, it was seen that there is an audience that supports these “more or less efforts”, and even participates in the process themselves and is “more or less” prone to that language. Such an image, of course, does not mean that, that “more or less mass” will gradually expand and that the intellectual environment they will create will dominate everywhere...

But this comes to mind: Terry Eagleton, in his book *The Mission of Criticism*, talks about the Enlightenment and writes that a “different” mass is competing

olarak asıl zorluğun, tarihsel bir mekânda yapıt sergileme olanaklarının darlığından doğduğunu da söylemek gerekir.

Ümit İnâatçı bir televizyon konuşmasında, serginin “Az Çok” başlığını saptarken şöyle düşündüğünü belirtmişti: “Sanatın ve kültürel değerlerin geriye atıldığı bir alanda, bunlar adına ne kadar fazla çaba gösterilirse gösterilsin, tümü de ‘az çok bir şeyler yapmak’ anlamına geliyor.” Bu sözler bir bakıma haklılık payına sahiptir; malûm ki bu tip organizasyonlar siyasi bir toplantının, popüler gösterilerin, futbol maçlarının vb. geniş kitlelerine ulaşmıyor; çünkü bu organizasyonlardaki dil de onlara benzemiyor. Oysa sergi boyunca görüldü ki bu “az çok çabalar”ı destekleyen, hatta sürece bizzat katılan ve o dile yatkın “az çok bir kitle” de mevcut. Böyle bir görüntü, o “az çok kit-



İsmet Değirmenci, (hiking notes) mixed media on canvas 3x25x25 cm.

ABOUT “MORE OR LESS” EXHIBITION

with the tyrannical and arbitrary dictates of the state. According to Eagleton, some subjects in the public sphere relate to each other not from within the traditional environment in which they can make judgments, but within the environment of universal rationality. When Eagleton wrote these, we must recognize the main factor that lay beneath his sentences: The basis that, that mass positioned itself as “convincing, clear and justified” certainly carried a language of its own. Moreover, this language was a response to the language of tyrannical and arbitrary commands. Inventing a new language was a necessity, as opposed to the traditional

le”nin giderek genişleyeceği ve onların yaratacağı entelektüel ortamın her yana hâkim olacağı anlamına gelmiyor tabii...

Ama akla şu geliyor: Terry Eagleton Eleştirinin Görevi adlı kitabında Aydınlanma’dan konu açar ve “farklı” bir kitlenin devletin zorba ve keyfi buyrukları ile boy ölçüştüğünü yazar. Eagleton’a göre, kamusal alandaki bazı özneler, yargıda bulunabilecekleri geleneksel ortamın içinden değil de evrensel rasyonalite ortamının içinden birbirleriyle ilişki kurmaktadır. Eagleton bunları yazdığında, onun tümcelerinin altına serilmiş olan ana etkeni fark etmeliyiz: O kitlenin, kendisini “ikna edici, belirgin ve gerekçeleri açık” olarak konumlandığı temel, elbette kendine ait bir dili de yanında taşımaktaydı. Ve bu dil, zorba ve keyfi buyrukların diline bir yanıttı. Egemenlerin dili ile tarihler boyu taşınan geleneksel enformasyonlara ya da buyruk tümcelerine karşı, yeni bir dilin icat edilmesi bir zorunluluktu. Ve belki de Ümit İnatçı’nın sergi başlığı olarak belirlediği “Az Çok” tabirinin anlamı burada bulunabilir. Bu sergide, birbirlerinden bağımsız yapıtlar üreten, çok farklı konulara yönelen sanatçılar yer aldı; ama onları birleştiren şey, işte o evrensel rasyonalite ortamının içinden bir dili tercih etmeleri idi.

Ümit İnatçı, sergide yer alan kendi yapıtları üzerine şöyle bir açıklama yazmıştı:



Emre Zeytinoğlu, 1/8 detail, 35x25 cm.

information or imperative sentences carried through the histories by the language of the sovereigns. And perhaps the meaning of the phrase “More or less” that Ümit İnâtçı has chosen as the title of the exhibition can be found here. In this exhibition, artists who produced works independently of each other and tended to very different subjects; but what united them was their preference for a language within that environment of universal rationality.

Ümit İnâtçı wrote the following statement on his own works in the exhibition:

“Kol ve yüzey arasındaki psikomotor ilişki uçucu olan ve kalıcı olan arasında -anlık eylem olarak- iki boyutlu bir düzleme taşıyorlar. Soyut sürrealistlerin bilinçten arınmaya yönelik psikadelik resim arayışından farklı olarak, bu resimlerdeki psikik yazısallık ve soyut lirizm arasında kurulan estetik dil kendi bağlamını sanatın kökeni olan ritüellikte arıyor. Saydam renk katmanları yüzeydeki hareketlenmenin hafızasına dönüşüyorken yüzeye kazıyarak oluşturulan hızlı çizikler ve üzerine eklenen piktogramlarla –altta duran ve üstte olan arasında– atmosferik bir bütünlük sağlanıyor. Arkeolojik kazılarda-



Sümer Erek, pencil color on paper, 50x70 cm.

ABOUT “MORE OR LESS” EXHIBITION

“The psychomotor relationship between the arm and the surface is transported to a two-dimensional plane between the volatile and the permanent - as instant action. Unlike the abstract surrealists' search for psychedelic paintings to purify consciousness, the aesthetic language constructed between psychic writing and abstract lyricism in these paintings seeks its context in ritual, which is the origin of art. While the transparent color layers turn into the memory of the movement on the surface, an atmospheric integrity is ensured – between the lower and upper ones – with the quick scratches created by scraping on the surface and the pictograms added on it. A link is established between the mound formation findings in archaeological excavations and the transparent mass images made up of temporal layers in prehistoric rock paintings”.



Carlo Carnevali, Untitled, oil color on paper, 50x50 cm.

ki höyük oluşum bulguları ile prehistorik kaya resimlerindeki zamansal katmanlardan oluşan saydam yığınsal resimler arasında bir bağ kuruluyor”.

Sümer Erek, topoğrafya çalışmalarını çağrıştıran, yükseklik ve derinlik ifade eden birtakım alanları tonal farklılıklarla kendi resimlerine taşıyor ve onlardan geometrik istifler oluşturuyor. Bu geometrik biçimlerin içlerine dikkat ettiğimizde ise orada organik dokuların varlığını fark ediyoruz. İlk bakışta algılanan geometrik biçimler ile sonradan fark edilen bu organik dokular, bize rastlantısallıkların ve düzenin örtüştüğü ikircikli bir bütünlüğü sunuyor. Tam olarak, bir biçim olarak görünen “şey”in hakikatini düşünmek ya da o biçimin tinselliğine ulaşmak sürecinin ifadesi bu resimler...

Carlo Carnevali, dinamik ve statik amorf renk alanları oluşturuyor ve o alanların düzensiz hareketleri arasındaki teması ya da bağlantıyı siyah lekeler ve çizgiler ile sağlıyor. Böyle bir bağlantı, aynı zamanda leke ve desen arasında herhangi bir biçimi belirleme kaygısı taşımayan enformel bir resim anlayışının da işaretlerini veriyor. Carlo Carnevali de Sümer Erek'in tavrına yakın olarak, rastlantısallıklarla yüzeye yayılmış renk parçalarının, özgün bir yöntemle düzenleme amacını taşıyor. Ümit İnataçlı, bu resimler üzerine yazdığı bir metinde şöyle bir yorum yapı-

Sümer Erek carries some areas that evoke topography studies, expressing height and depth to his paintings with tonal differences and creates geometric stacks from them. When we pay attention to the interior of these geometric shapes, we notice the presence of organic textures there. The geometric shapes perceived at first glance and these organic textures, which are noticed later on, offer us an ambivalent integrity where randomness and order overlap. Exactly, these paintings are the expression of the process of thinking about the truth of the "thing" that appears as a form or reaching the spirituality of that form.

Carlo Carnevali creates dynamic and static areas of amorphous color and provides the contact or connection between the irregular movements of those areas with black spots and lines. Such a connection also signals an informal understanding of painting that is not concerned with determining any form between the stain and the pattern. Carlo Carnevali also aims to arrange the color pieces scattered on the surface with a unique method, close to Sümer Erek's attitude. Ümit İnâtçı comments on these pictures in a text he wrote: "When we look at the arrangement of the color parts, which have a random planning, we see that black and

yor: "Rastlantısal bir planlamaya sahip olan renk parçalarının düzenine baktığımız zaman, ağırlıklı olarak siyah ve beyazın negatif-pozitif karşıtlığı, kırmızının da dinamik alan olarak kullanıldığını görürüz. Ölüm ve yaşam karşılaştırmasının soyut ifadesi gibi görünen bu resimleri soyut ekspresyonist ekolün uzantısı olarak algılayabiliriz".

Demetra Kokkinou, renkli dergi sayfalarını kullanarak kâğıt bükmelerden ve katlamalardan oluşan doku çalışmaları oluşturuyor. Bu dokular, yüzeyde birbirlerine yakın oranlarda alçaltılar ve yükseltilelerle beliriyor ve heykel ile resim arasında bir noktada beden buluyor. Son derece denetimli bir bütünlük ile çoğaltılan bu doku elemanları, kendi kurguları içinde organik hareketlerden geometrik



İsmet Değirmenci, untitled, water color on paper and canvas 35X35 cm.

ABOUT “MORE OR LESS” EXHIBITION

white are predominantly used as negative-positive contrast, and red is used as a dynamic area. We can perceive these paintings, which seem to be abstract expressions of the comparison of death and life, as an extension of the abstract expressionist school”.

Demetra Kokkinou creates texture works from paper twists and folds using colored magazine pages. These textures appear on the surface with lows and elevations in close proportions to each other and embody at a point between sculpture and painting. These texture elements, reproduced with a highly controlled integrity, evolve from organic movements to a geometric order in their own setups, and as a result, they start to evoke ancient mosaics in a method reminiscent of Op Art. Such a controlled relationship between randomness and geometrical forms makes a subtle reference to the attitude in the works of Sümer Erek and Carlo Carnevali in terms of organic structures and their ordering.

İsmet Değirmenci emphasized the importance he attributed to “trekking” at a time when ecological problems are now being taken very seriously, and exhibited this in a series of pictures he made from visual notes he kept moment to moment. The artist, who has already focused his art on the human-nature relationship, sees these

bir düzene evriliyor ve sonuçta, sanki Op Art’ı andıran bir yöntemle antik dönem mozaiklerini çağrıştırmaya başlıyor. Rastlantısallıklar ile geometrik biçimler arasında kurulan böyle bir denetimli ilişki, organik yapılar ile onların bir düzene sokulması açısından, yine Sümer Erek’in ve Carlo Carnevali’nin yapıtlarındaki tavra incelikli bir gönderme yapıyor.

İsmet Değirmenci, ekolojik sorunların artık son derece ciddiye alındığı bu dönemde, “doğa yürüyüşü”ne atfettiği önemi vurguladı ve bunu da anı anına tuttuğu görsel notlardan oluşturduğu bir dizi resim halinde sergiledi. Kendi sanatını zaten çoktandır insan-doğa ilişkisi üzerinde yoğunlaştıran sanatçı, bu doğa yürüyüşlerini insanın kendi benliğini ayırmsaması adına vazgeçilmecek bir eylem olarak görüyor. İsmet değirmenci, 2020 yılında açtığı “Doğa Konuşur” adlı sergisinin katalog metninde şöyle bir tümce yazmıştı: “Doğanın içinde olmak boş zaman doldurmak değildir; ontolojik bir gereksinim olarak onun gerçekliğini içselleştirmek ve yok oluşuna neden olan açgözlü, yetinmeyen insan sömürüsüne karşı koymak ve savunmaktır aynı zamanda”.

Emre Zeytinoğlu sıradan ve önemszenmeyen nesnelerin, bazı yerlerde ve bazı zamanlarda yaşanan olaylar ile anlam kazandığını, bunların yeniden bir imge-

nature walks as an indispensable action for people to realize their own self. İsmet Değirmenci wrote the following sentence in the catalog text of his exhibition “Nature Speaks” which he held in 2020: “Being in nature isn't just a waste of time; internalizing its reality as an ontological need and at the same time resisting and defending the greedy, insatiable human exploitation that caused its extinction”.

Emre Zeytinoğlu featured a series of images that argue that ordinary and unimportant objects gain meaning in some places and at some times with events that take place and that it is not necessary to transform them into an reconstructed image. These objects, which are presented as witnesses of the happening at that time and in that place, become objects of memory with the short explanatory texts attached to them and acquire a documentary quality. These real objects, collected from different events in different places, were designed with explanatory texts and complementary minimal patterns and were placed in the space with the logic of a history museum. Ümit İnatçı, on the other hand, summed up his thoughts on these works in the following paragraph: “Whatever is left of the experiences in the places we visit, returns to us as a memory layer of the relationship between space and object. Being

ye dönüştürülmesinin gerekli olmadığını savunan bir dizi görüntüye yer verdi. Tam o sırada ve tam o yerde oluşun tanıkları halinde sunulan bu nesneler, yanlarına eklenen açıklayıcı kısa metinler ile birer bellek nesnesi haline gelmekte ve belgesel bir nitelik edinmekteydiler. Farklı yerlerdeki farklı olaylardan toplanarak getirilen bu gerçek nesneler, açıklayıcı metinler ve tamamlayıcı minimal desenlerle birlikte tasarlanmış ve mekâna sanki bir tarih müzesi mantığı ile yerleşmişti. Ümit İnatçı ise bu yapıtlar hakkındaki düşüncesini şöyle bir paragrafta toplamıştı: “Uğradığımız yerlerde-



Ümit İnatçı, Cosmic Garden, 2022, oil on paper, 100x60 cm.

ABOUT “MORE OR LESS” EXHIBITION

in a place temporarily and making that moment a part of our existence after that experience is the manifestation of an ontic behavior”.

ki yaşanmışlıklardan geriye kalan her ne varsa mekân ve nesne ilişkisinin bir hafıza katmanı olarak bize dönüyor. Bir yerde geçici olarak bulunmak ve o bulunma deneyiminden sonra o anı mevcudiyetimizin bir parçası kılmak ontik bir davranışın tezahürüdür”.



Demetra Kokkinou, Untitled, 2022, paper relief hard texture.

CYPRriot VISUAL ARTISTS DESIGN FOR THE STAGE

Dr. Nadia Anaxagorou

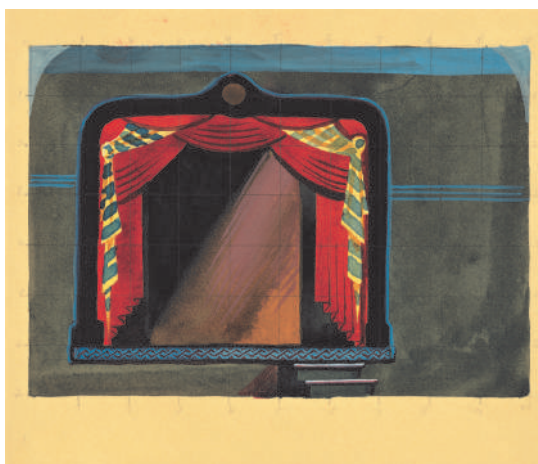
The exhibition «Visual Acts» which was realized in the Limassol Municipal Art Centre-Apothikes Papadaki (4 October – 3 December 2022), curated by Mariza Bargilly, is a substantial contribution to the research recording the relationship between Cypriot visual artists and the stage. As many well-known painters, sculptors and engravers have designed for the theatre, which thus mirrors artistic trends prevailing in the island, throughout the years.

Bringing to mind his wood engravings, the drawings for theatre costumes by

Telemachos Kanthos the pioneer Cypriot engraver, are pervaded by a lyrical structure and a distinct poetics. Whereas the visual rendering of the Cypriot fairy-tale by Hambis Tsangaris, an engraver of a later era who draws on Cypriot archaic ceramics and folk art, accompanies the dramatization of these popular narratives.

The quest for geometric harmony, inherent in the paintings by Stelios Votsis, is repeated in his set design motifs for furniture, in correspondence with the schematized painting clarity by Andreas Ladommatis and the abstraction upon classical drawings by Andreas Charalambous, which are also channeled in their work with scenography.

Two painters of different generations, Glyn Hughes and Andreas Paraskeva, take on the role of colourists on stage, where they relocate their idiosyncratic chromatic range and texture, as is the case with another two artists, Stella Michaelidou and Valentino Joseph,



Telemachos Kanthos

whose stage practice is imbued with their recognizable drawing style.

Mostly, paintings by artists such as Glyn Hughes and Demetris Neocleous are used in lieu of a stage background; exerting a decisive impact in the perception of the play, and the same holds true for the metal sculptures and the relief halos by Antonis Neophytou as well as the flower-embroidered lace veils by Marianna Constanti. Without abolishing their self-sufficiency, these works offer insightful significations to the play, while reversely costumes or set accessories, specifically created for the theatre, are transformed to self-contained sculptural creations, as in the case of Melita Kouta and Koula Savvidou.

Sculptors Koula Savvidou and Maria Loizidou manage to transplant on stage, via simple, unadorned and light creations, the unbearable burden often carried by the protagonists, as does Nikos Kouroushis, who encapsulates in his minimal set and costume design a heavy conceptual load. Maria Lianou renegotiates the female breast, delineating it as a pair of connected plumb bobs,

which are placed upon the protagonist's shoulders, determining thus emotional vibrations and fluctuations, according to their balance and movement on the human body.

Theodoulos Gregoriou's sculptural set compositions, made of various found and constructed objects and other structural pieces, diffuse a sense of perpetual multiplication in a metaphysical infinity, whereas this multi-collective mixture of units is also representative of Maria Papacharalambous, whose work with Achilleas Kentonis opens up streams of imagination in the solidity of things, through disparate reconciliations.

Finding no logic in reproducing nature, Elena Kotasvili opts to transpose it itself upon the stage, where soil, wood, stones, rocks, ears of corn and weeds predominate, while her work with Alexis Vagianos has proved inventive, having incorporated the element of water in the form of aquatic surfaces.

*Director of the Cultural Services, Municipality of Limassol

VISUAL ACTS

Mariza Bargilly

This exhibition at the Limassol Municipal Arts Centre - Apothikes Papadaki presents the work of important visual artists, who worked as set and costume designers in theaters in Cyprus, through photographs, drawings, posters, textiles, paintings, props, costumes, masks, and 3D models.

The research that was carried out for the needs of this exhibition was made

possible by the valuable help of the Cyprus Theater Organization. Special thanks to THOC's Board of Directors, the president of the Board Ms. Antigone Papaflippou and the artistic director Mr. Savvas Kyriakides, to Ms. Maria Efstathiou, Officer in the Publications/ Public Relations Department and to Mr. Haris Kafkaridis, Technical Director. The contribution of the Cyprus Theater Museum, Ms. Angelina Moridou and Ms. Ni-



Hambis Tsaggaris

Visual Acts

coletta Tziaouri was also significant. The digital archives of the ENA and ETHAL Theater contributed substantially in locating the material.

The Cyprus Theater Organization, the Theater Museum, Skala Theater, and Dionysos Theater provided costumes and other material presented in the exhibition. Special thanks to the photographers Antonis Farmakas, Christos Avraamides, Christos Theodorides, Demetris Loutsios, Evis Ioannides. Also, to the Telemachos Kanthos Foundation

and Ms. Eleni Kanthou, to the Glyn Hughes Foundation and Mr. Charalambos Sergiou, to Ms. Nicolaidou for the drawings of Stella Michaelidou, and to the artists who met with me and generously provided designs, costumes, posters, masks, models, and photos from their personal archive. Also, thanks to RIK for the provision of audio-visual material shown in the exhibition.

As the exhibition presents works mostly made from the 1970s and onwards, there was a difficulty in locating material, especially the 3D models and costumes due to the deterioration of the materials and the difficulty in preserving them due to lack of space experienced by most theatre companies.

In a period when a graduate degree in set design was rare, the Cypriot Theater was flourishing, especially around the time of RIK Theater's and the Cyprus Theater Organization's foundation. Therefore, visual artists worked with great frequency in Cyprus' theatres. Through this juncture, they contributed a huge amount of work and created memorable sets and costumes. Along the way, new generations of visual artists worked in the theater contributing to the reshaping of the landscape and the renewal of the means, materials and aesthetics that permeated their proposals. While



Maria Loizidou

producing this important work, these artists excelled in their personal work as well participating in international exhibitions and events.

Participating artists are Telemachos Kanthos, Stelios Votsis, Nikos Kourousis, Glyn Hughes, Andreas Ladommatos, Andreas Charalambous, Hambis Tsaggaris, Theodoulos Grigoriou, Koula Savvides, Valentinos Josef, Stella Michaelidou, Maria Loizidou, Maria Papacharalambous, Andreas Paraskeva, Antonis Neofytou, Demetris Neocleous, Melita Couta, Paravan, Maria Lianou, Alexis Vayianos and Elena Kotasvili. Undoubtedly, there is still a number of visual artists

with significant theater design presence such as Mikis Loizou, Spyros Demetriadis, Andreas Efesopoulos, Dora Orontis, Andis Ioannidis, Vera Hatzida, Evros Evriviades, George Georgiades, George Achilleos and others.

Telemachos Kanthos (1910 – 1993) is considered the father of Cypriot Scenography since after his return from Athens he worked as a permanent stage and costume designer at the Lyrikon and Neo Lyrikon Theatres. Also, as mentioned by Yannis Katsouris in the edition of Theatre in Cyprus, Volume II (1940-1959), Telemachos Kanthos was also a permanent stage designer for the



Koula Savvidou

PanCyprian Theater Prometheus which began its activity in 1944. The exhibition presents the artist's studies from that period as well as his later works in collaboration with THOC between 1973 and 1975 (Lorca's *The Shoemaker's Prodigious Wife* in 1973, *A door must be either open or shut*, by Alfred De Musset, both directed by Sokratis Karatinos and *The Pleasure of Honesty* by Pirandello directed by Nikos Siafkalis in 1975). The Telemachos Kanthos Foundation carefully preserved his archive. His work could very well be the subject of the recording and identification of his staged work during his collaboration with the theater groups of Cyprus, before the establishment of THOC.

Stelios Votsis (1929-2012), according to the Cyprus Theater Organization's archive, worked as a set designer for the play *Red Roses for Me* by Sean O' Casey, directed by Nikos Siafkalis, which was



Nikos Kouroussis

staged at the Nicosia Municipal Theater in 1975, and in *Antigone* by Jean Anouilh also directed by Nikos Siafkallis in 1975. In *Antigone* one can detect common references between the visual work of Votsis and the costumes designs for this performance.

Glyn Hughes (1931-2014) who lived the most creative years of his career in Cyprus, is an important chapter in the history of Cypriot theater. Alongside his important presence in the visual arts, he worked as a set and costume designer at THOC in several productions, such as *Measure for Measure* by William Shakespeare, directed by the German Heinz Uwe – Haus (1975), with whom he co-designed the set. The applique background of the setting was stunning. It was common for Hughes to include paintings and textiles in the performances he designed, as in Giuseppe Manfredi's *Zozos* at Theater ENA directed by Evis Gavrielides (2003). One of these works that served as a background to his set design is presented in the exhibition.

Nikos Kouroussis (b.1937), an artist with a strong presence in cultural aspects both locally and abroad, designed for THOC for the first time during the 1971-1972 theater season in the production *A Streetcar named Desire* by Tennessee Williams, directed by Nikos Hadji-

skos. Since then, he has worked as a set /costume designer in both the state and independent theaters of Cyprus (ETHAL, ENA Theater, Dionysos Theater) in emblematic productions such as The Caucasian Chalk Circle (THOC, 1975-1976) Mother Courage and her Children (THOC, 1977-1978), while Kouroussis designed the set collaborating with Glyn Hughes on the costumes. Both plays were directed by Heinz - Uwe Haus. With innovative sets and costumes, he collaborated with the state theater in more than thirty productions. His costumes and masks are characterized by a sculptural mood, his sets are sometimes dreamlike as in Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream directed by Evis Gavrielides (THOC, 1991) and Xenia Kalogeropoulou's Odyssevach directed by Tasos Anastasiou (THOC, 1984). He sometimes built with architectural perfection such as its excellent design for the performance The Tailor's Shop by Jean-Claude Grumberg directed by Yianis Iordanidis (THOC, 1995). He also had important collaborations in Greece and Germany.

Andreas Ladommatos(b.1940) is the first visual artist/scenographer to use the revolving stage of the Municipal Theater in 1976 in the THOC performance The Witches of Salem by Arthur Miller directed by Nicos Siafkalis. It was prece-

ded by the design of stage/costumes for performances at the Pangyprio Gymnasium and at the historical RIK Theater (The Game of Madness and Wisdom by Giorgos Theotokas in 1971, directed by Evi Gavrielidis). The artist's design acumen is reflected in the studies/designs of sets, costumes and wigs presented in the exhibition. His first collaboration with the state theater was in 1973 in Goldoni's The Mistress of the Inn (La Locandiera) directed by Sokratis Karantinos.

Stella Michaelidou (1940-2017) collaborated with THOC for Cypriot Fairy Ta-



Andreas Paraskeva

les adapted/directed by Monica Vassiliou (1985). The premiere of the show was given at the Giordamli Theater in Limassol as part of the Mobile Unit of the Children's Theater THOC Limassol - Paphos. This was followed by the production *All we eat...all we drink* by Vassilis Mitsakis directed by Monica Vassiliou (1989), and the children's play *Karagiozis* and *Sis the Alien* by Nitsa Thalassinou directed by Svetlana Charalambous (1991). At ETHAL, he worked on several productions, mainly directed by Monica Vassiliou, such as *Without knowing how* by Luigi Pirandello (1994), *Mother's Marijuana is the best* by Dario Fo (1997) and others.

Andreas Charalambous (b.1947) collaborated with THOC, the ENA Theater and the Satiriko Theater in several productions. The exhibition presents –among other things– his painting studies for plays such as *Astrid Lindgren's Karlsson-on-the-roof* directed by Svet-



Glyn Hughes

lana Charalambous, produced by THOC (1989), Strindberg's *The Father* directed by Andreas Christodoulides at the ENA Theater (1991) where one finds the artist's developed sense of perspective and the rich understanding of colour, characteristics of his personal work in painting. His collaborations with the RIK Theater as well as his stage designs for the THOC productions *The Island of Athol Fougart* directed by Fotos Fotiadis (1977) and Pushkin's *Little Tragedies* directed by Valery Achatov (1999) also stand out. Unfortunately, most of his work on drawings and 3D models no longer exists since a fire in 2006 destroyed his workshop.

The engraver Hampis Tsaggaris (b.1947) designed sets and costumes for plays based on Cypriot fairy tales, maintaining the motifs and qualities found in his engravings. He collaborated with THOC in the productions *The Prince of Venice* and *Spanos* and the *Forty Dragons* directed by Alexia Papalazarou (1997). He has also illustrated the versions of these fairy tales. The exhibition presents an impressive costume and mask used for the play *Spanos* and the *Forty Dragons*.

Valentinos Josef (b.1953) has staged several plays for children's theater mainly at ETHAL such as *A day at the Circus* by Babis Anagiotos directed by Andre-

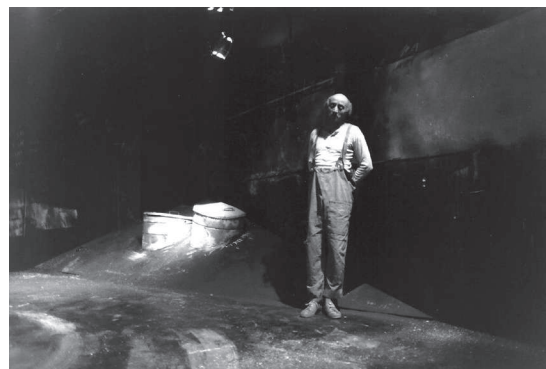
as Melekis (1996), *In the jungle with wild beasts* by Polina Thrasivoulidou directed by her (2003), and also plays for the main stage of ETHAL such as the production *Father, my good father* by Manos Panagiotopoulos directed by Andreas Melekis (1993). He collaborated with THOC on *Magic Hats* by Ioanna Argyrou and Kika Pulcheriou directed by Varnavas Kyriazis (1992) and on *Euripides' Bacchae* also directed by Kyriazis (2011). He had important collaborations with the Diastasis Group, some of which are featured in the exhibition.

Koula Savvidou (b. 1956) is a sculptor with a significant presence as a stage/costume designer without having collaborated with THOC. She has worked with important Cypriot directors such as Varnavas Kyriazis (*Women of Color* by Vassilis Ziogas, Theater ENA, 1989), Andreas Pantzis (*Another Sunday* by Spyros Papadogeorgos, ETHAL, 1990) and others.

Theodoulos Grigoriou (b.1956) mostly collaborated with the director Andreas Pantzis. In the production of THOC *Victory* by Loula Anagnostaki (1989) he designed an imposing set while the play *Macbeth* by William Shakespeare (2000) he proposes a set that changes and evolves during the performance. He collaborates again with Pantzis and the

Artoforio Theatre in the production of Aeschylus' *Prometheus Bound*, which participates in the Kypria International Festival in 2014, where his stage design is composed of an imposing sculptural metal installation. His first work was at Theatre ENA, in 1989 for Beckett's *Endgame*, also directed by Andreas Pantzis.

Maria Loizidou (b.1958) is an artist with an uninterrupted presence in exhibitions and events abroad and in Cyprus. She has designed costumes, masks, sets, and costumes for performances at THOC, ETHAL and abroad, specifically in France. She collaborated with Nikos Kouroussis in historical productions of THOC while creating excellent masks for the production *The Crouch* by Menander directed by Evis Gavrielides (1985), which are exhibited in the present exhibition, she designed the costumes in the production of Lorca's *Blood Wedding* (1986) and the jewelry of the performance *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*



Theodoulos Grigoriou

Visual Acts

by Bertolt Brecht (1976). Some of these drawings are presented in the exhibition. At ETHAL he designed the sets and costumes for the production *The Investigator Comes* by Jason Priestley, directed by Thanos Saketas (1989). For THOC, she designed sets and costumes for productions of his children's stage *Noodle Doodle Box* by Paul Maar directed by Phaidros Stassinou (1984) and *The Madman* by Filisa Hatzihanna directed by Monica Vasileiou (1986).

Andreas Paraskevas (b. 1962) is a graduate of the Athens School of Fine Arts and collaborates mainly with the Skala Theatre. Among the works he has designed are *Wealth* by Aristophanes and *Georges Dandin* or *the Thwarted Husband* by Moliere directed by Andreas Melekis (2018). His design ability is demonstrated through the series of designs for the costumes of the performances mentioned above that are presented in this exhibition along with two impressive costumes. For the state theater, he has designed the costumes for Thornton Wilder's *Our Little Town*, directed by Christos Siopachas (2008).

Maria Papacharalambous (b. 1964) has a significant presence -together with Achilleas Kentonis - from 1998 until 2004 in THOC productions such as *The Evros river across* by Repas and Papa-

thanasiou directed by Stefanos Kotsikos (2000), *The Price* by Arthur Miller directed by Andreas Maragos (2002) and Evgenios Trivizas' *The War of Koutsoulia* (2004). With Andreas Maragos, they also collaborated in the production of Yannis Xanthoulis's *Get on the roof to eat the cloud* (1998).

Antonis Neophytou (b. 1972) integrates to his stage the objects that make up his visual installations and collaborates with the director and researcher of the work of Tennessee Williams, Anthoulis Demosthenous. Through symbolism, his objects serve the vision of the director, as in the performance *Letters to Tennessee*, presented at the 2nd Platform of Cypriot Creators at the Rialto Theatre in 2019.

Demetris Neokleous (b.1973) collaborates with the Cyprus Theater Organization in two plays in 2002, *The Moonstruck* by Pavlos Liasidis directed by Andreas Tsouris and *A Strange Afternoon* by Antonis Doriadis directed by Chrysanthos Chrysanthou. In 2002, he works with Andreas Christodoulidis at the ENA Theater in Christopher Durang's production *Baby with the Bathwater*.

Melita Couta (b. 1974) studied fine arts and sculpture in England and, returning to Cyprus, created the group Paravan,

together with stage designer Haris Kavkaridis. With its own theatrical productions, the group mainly presented site-specific performances, impressing with its ingenuity and originality both in the themes of the plays, as well as in the design and implementation of the sets and costume. As an example, I quote the show ZOO, based on Orwell's book, Animal Farm (directed and produced by PARAVAN, 2007), from which the impressive sculptural costume installation presented in the exhibition. Melita Couta individually worked as a set /costume designer in THOC's productions and collaborated with most independent theater groups.

Maria Lianou (b. 1976) is a graduate of the Painting and Sculpture Department of the Athens School of Fine Arts. She collaborated with Achim Wieland and Marios Ioannou in the play Eleni by Yiannis Ritsos directed by Wieland in a recent presentation of the play in 2022. She creates a sculptural intervention that organically fits into the performance and changes the way the actor carries his body on stage.

Elena Kotasvili (b.1984) has designed sets for theater productions and contemporary dance performances, succeeding through her work in creating captivating images with installations that



Elena Kotasvili

Visual Acts

succeed in entralling the viewer and integrating them into the atmosphere of the performance. Her design for the play *Minetti* by Thomas Bernhard staged by the Theater Dentre won the THOC's New Creator award.

In collaboration with visual artist Alexis Vayianos (b.1981) they represented Cyprus at the Prague Quadrennial in 2019, (PQ19) with the large-scale installation *Status Quo in Mirage* curated by Marina Maleni. They have also designed the set for the THOC's production *Stella with the red gloves* by Iakovos Kambanelis directed by Konstantinos Arvanitakis (2018) and in the production of the Performing Arts Center MITOS Ship

of *Fools* directed by Lukasz Walewski (2014) contributing to the creation of a site-specific water installation.

Scenography, since the ancient times is present in the theatrical act using masks, costumes, and special constructions. The boundaries of scenography in modern theater are expanded with the use of new technologies. New terms and definitions are added to the bibliography. The term scenography is also now part of Museology and describes the diligence in the presentation of exhibits. This exhibition presents a very small part of the history of Cypriot scenography and the talented visual artists who served it and continue to do so.

COSTAS AND RITA SEVERIS FOUNDATION / THE CENTRE OF VISUAL ARTS AND RESEARCH

Rita Severis

Ars Axis magazine is an intellectual platform where art and visual culture meet. Clothing, household items, jewelry, tools, which are the memory objects of lived lives, are not only indicators of social status, but also indispensable elements of object ontology. The cultural dimension of the relationship between

time and space has also always been the inspiration for artistic creativity. Visual culture has contributed as much as written culture has contributed to the development of civilizations. Visual memory is a memory quality that constantly feeds what needs to be said and contributes to the development of written culture.



Therefore, “The Center of Visual Arts and Reserch”, created under the auspices of the Costas and Rita Severis Foundation has undertaken an important function as a place of social-collective memory that reminds us of the authentic multicultural identity of our island.

The Centre of Visual Arts and Reserch is the home of the Costas and Rita Severis Foundation in 285 Ermou Street, 1017, Nicosia, in the heart of the old city. It was established in September 2014 with the help of the Foundation, the USAID and the EEA Norway Grants. The Foundation/CVAR has two aims: the promotion of Cypriot culture locally and

abroad and the promotion of reconciliation and peaceful coexistence among all the communities on the island.

A board of Directors governs the Foundation, while Dr Rita Severis, who reports to the Board, run the CVAR gratis. We share with our readers the information that Rita Severis gave us about the history and goals of the centre.

By Rita Severis:

The CVAR holds collections of over 1500 paintings of Cyprus from the 18th-20th century, hundreds of memorabilia and costumes from those periods and has



a Research Centre, with thousands of books, archives and over 50,000 old photographs of Cyprus. All this is open to the public for consultation and research free of charge. The CVAR holds educational programs for schools, approved by the Ministry of Education; it holds lectures, concerts, tours of the island, presentations, screenings, exhibitions etc. It is a living cell of our city and a cultural hub. In 2015, Kate Clerides donated to the Foundation all of her father's, ex-President of the Republic, 3,000 books, masses of memorabilia, decorations and over 10,00- photographs. These items are placed in the Clerides Library, which was inaugurated by President Anastasiades and Mr Mustafa Akinci, leader of the Turkish

Cypriot Community. Over 3,000 people from both communities were present.

Our Centre is the one and only bicomunal museum in Cyprus. Where politicians are failing us, we are turning to a bottom-up approach by using culture to unite the people of Cyprus. Through the use of culture and art as major tools, CVAR seeks to make a meaningful bottom-up contribution towards creating and maintaining a climate of peaceful coexistence, respect and understanding of 'the other', thus laying the foundations for the reunification of the island's people. It is designed to keep alive hopes for reunification of the island and peaceful co-existence between its various communities. The CVAR aims to create a



bridge from the past to the future for the people of Cyprus. A series of activities at the CVAR are designed to bring the two main communities of the island closer, to build friendships and foster joint participation in common projects with shared benefits, thus increasing the potential for peaceful coexistence. The Museum embraces all communities on the island and has special corners with presentations relating to each of them. Towards this end, all our lectures pertain to Cyprus; all our events have Cyprus in their heart. While these activities involve interaction and exchange between members of the two main communities in Cyprus (which are currently divided), they, at the same time, have a strong cultural and educational dimension, helping all participants,

regardless of their origin, to learn more about the shared past of the island. As with the CVAR's permanent exhibitions, the aim of the activities that make up this Centre is not to indoctrinate nor push a particular political point of view. The aim is to offer information to the audience and allow them to engage with it in a critical manner, while promoting a culture of tolerance and respect for different perspectives.

Most important, however, are the educational programmes that the CVAR organises, reaching children from 6-18 years old. These programmes are free of charge and offer a new, more objective and historically all-embracing perspective of the island's history and histori-



cal events, which hopefully will effect changes of attitudes and help introduce a new way of perceiving ‘the other’. These younger members of society, who have never lived in a united island and have very little contact with one another across the divide, are the most important target group of the Center.

The CVAR is delighted to announce the launch of its new website. A completely new presentation and approach that will enable our followers to be informed about us, to interact with us and to enjoy everything the Centre has to offer in a more friendly and accessible way. The website will be in three languages, Greek, Turkish and English.

The new website platform will include all our collections of paintings, costumes, memorabilia and archives but also our newly increased and extended photographic collection/archive of old photographs of the island and its people, which is now numbering almost 50,000. Furthermore, a new collections management programme will enable followers and researchers to access more interesting and detailed information about every item in the museum. One will be able to interact and give us information about our collections or ask questions. Our events, our educational programmes and all our news can be viewed on our new website. Our projects will be on the website along with



virtual exhibitions and tours. We are very happy to invite you to visit our new webpage at <https://www.cvar.severis.org/>. Of course its building is an ongoing process which will take long to finish, if ever! Don't forget to visit YouTube CVAR. There are some lovely videos like Thoughts over a cup of coffee, with a Greek and a Turkish Cypriot discussing current affairs, tour of Government House, interviews etc.

The CVAR has created a telephone application during the European Heritage

Days which any one can download free of charge. Just choose from the Google or Apple store Culture Connects and follow the route. It will take you all over Nicosia, north and south and will show you images of the sites as they were before. Choose your language out of eight.

We feel we must mention our small but very interesting shop where we sell items related to our exhibitions and books on Cyprus in three languages.

The Foundation/CVAR has been award-

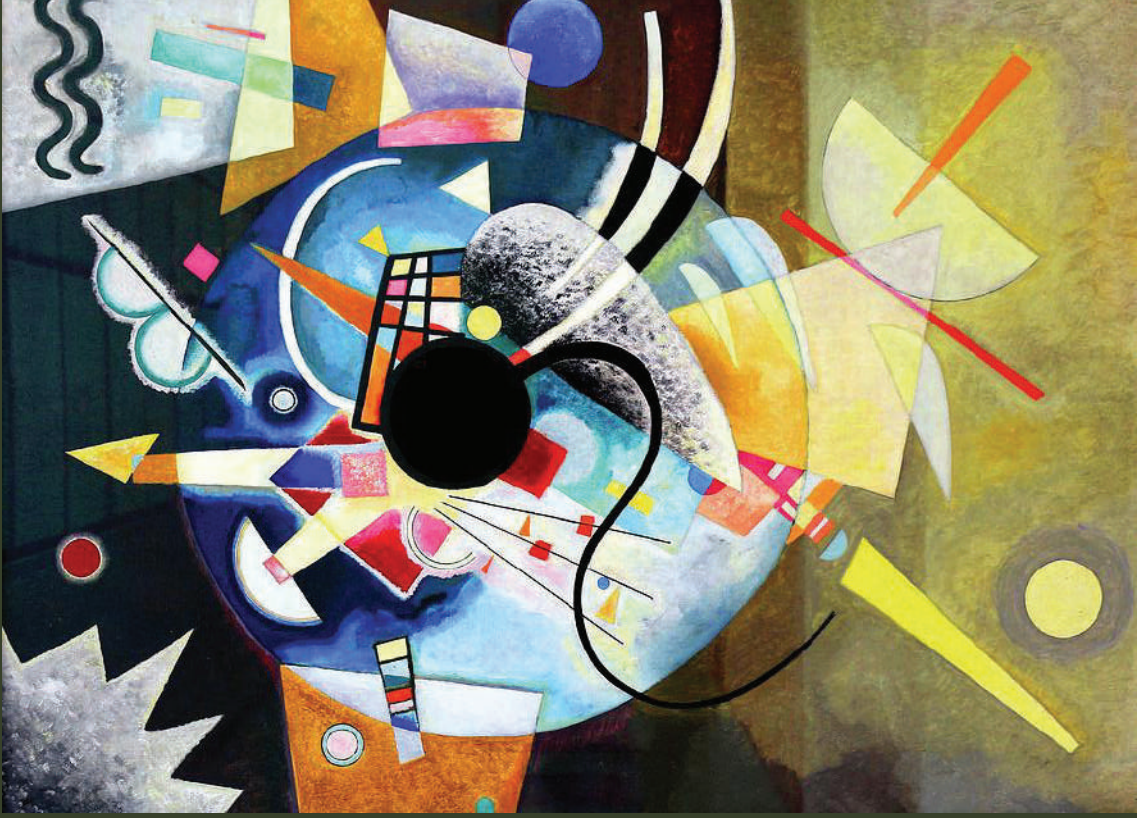


ed in 2017 the Europa Nostra award for education, training and awareness raising as well as the Grand Prix of the European Commission for Culture. In 2018, it was presented as one of the Best of the Best Museums in Europe and became a member of the Excellence Club. In 2019, the Municipality of Nicosia honoured the CVAR with an award for its contribution to the capital, while in 2022 the Open University awarded the CVAR for its cooperation with the said University. Perhaps the CVAR is the only museum in the world, which has its own football team! What better way to get young

men interested in culture and associate with a museum? Apart from playing in the Cyprus amateur league, the CVAR football team holds matches with Turkish Cypriot teams in both the north and south part of the island.

(Do visit us. Follow us on Facebook www.facebook.com/CVAR.severis, Twitter www.twitter.com/cvar_severis, Instagram www.instagram.com/cvar.severis and follow our webpage <https://cvar.severis.org>)





“Color is the keyboard, the eyes are the harmonies, and the soul is the piano with many strings. The artist is the hand that plays, touching one key or another, to cause vibrations in the soul.”

“Renk klavyedir, gözler ahenklerdir ve ruh çok telli bir piyanodur. Sanatçı, ruhta titreşimlere neden olmak için bir tuştan diğerine dokunarak oynayan eldir.”

Wassily Kandinsky



■ The international art magazine Ars Axis published quarterly by Umit Inatçı Art Center, is covering of plastic, visual arts and visual culture fields aiming to contribute to the Cyprus and international art scene with thoughts, criticism and studies, and especially to build a bridge between European and Middle Eastern art. The international art magazine published and directed by Ümit İnâtçı is being distribute primarily in Cyprus, Italy, England, Turkey and Iran. The magazine that will be sent to the certain international art centers and museums will play an important role in promoting Cypriot art to the world and world art to Cyprus.

Ars Axis, which is being publishing quarterly with seasonal issues, will always include the texts and works of competent art critics and artists, while also featuring young artists and writers who make quality works. Internationally renowned art critics and artists from different eastern and western countries will continue to contribute with their articles and artworks.

■ You can visit web site of Umit Inatci Art Center (www.umitinatciartcenter.com) and chose the way (off-line or online payment) how to purchase single issue. Enter the UIAC web page and go-click on Ars Axis logo “buy now”.

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*"The human body is first and foremost
a mirror to the soul and its greatest
beauty comes from that."*

Auguste Rodin

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