

The unconsciousness of choice and the influence of the voiceless image

Descriptive, figurative, abstract, or symbolic. Classical, conceptual, compositional, cubic, contemporary, surrealistic. Modern, classic or a combination of styles, experiences, feelings, thoughts, senses or insensitivity – art beholds many descriptions. The human desire to contain everything visible into a form, to give it a definition, to enclose it in a box, to define each visual provocation, brings the serenity of obtaining and explaining the ownership of a piece of art. The path of the spiritually-sterile space of a gallery or the market stand with forged copies of famous painters, sugarcoated landscapes, works created, and brought from far-away countries, create a distinct feeling of exclusiveness. They turn the physical logistics of a painting into a secrete ritual, granting the owner a respectful intellectual knowledge. It is there on the wall that SHE takes on her provided space, accompanied by the yet still rushing anxious or joyful thoughts of her new *master*.

Exactly here begin all reflections, asking the question – who is actually the *master*?

H.R. Giger with fear and unexplainable faith tells his so called *real occult story* (Giger, 2002). It is connected to a mysterious sculpture, given to him by his friend the gallerist Bijan Aalam – the *reason* behind his vast collection of occult items¹. Giger's tendency towards mysterious subjects, connected to strange rituals, dark symbols and depressive experiences are

¹ The real occult story is a narrative provoked by true events connected to Giger's gift – a hollow wooden devil's head, wrapped in human skin, presented to him by his close friend the gallerist Bijan Aalam. The origins of the head with three small horns tilted backwards remains a mystery. It is supposed that it served as a ritual item during the Black Mass. With her formal displays Giger connect a few very unpleasant events in his life. After he hides it in his basement, the series of unfortunate events are over. It is supposed that it was a channel for dark powers.

proverbial. They bring him specific feelings of satisfaction and surround him with the longed for and fulfilling mystique of his inner psychological needs. But this “demonic head” manages to disrupt even his unparalleled comfort, which he finds in the dark atmosphere of the fearful and unexplainable. The possession of the head leads to a string of tragic events in his life, after every single exhibition in which it is presented. Is it coincidence or reality? H.R. Giger himself is considering the second.

What explains the consciousness of choice? Color, composition, thematic, figurativeness or the presence of the classic – golden ratio, S-shaped line, aerial or emotional perspective? Do they signify the selection of an appropriate work? Are the esthetic pleasure of an observed object, subjected to the characteristics of beauty and its’ definition as such, not a criteria only for the professional sight, or are they accessible to the untrained observer? Do the proportions of a human skeleton according to the law of “The Golden Ratio” by Adolf Zeising from 1854 and the experimental esthetics of the same period, still influence the selection of a work of art, chosen to enliven the wall of the connoisseur at home (Zeising, 1854)? Do the genetics of human perceptions carry a pre-disposition within the choice of even the greatest dilettante?

Despite the answer of all those questions, the unconscious almost intuitive choice of the ordinary connoisseur brings the pleasure and satisfaction of the possession.

Probably the best question is: “Does man chose the work of art, or it chooses its owner? For a long time modern contemporary art is not concerned with the matters in connection to the visual delight of the observed. It analyses, seeks, asks, reveals, emphasizes and works deep in the levels of the unconscious, as it creates an atmosphere in which travelling in time and space of psychological quests and provocations, is a symbol of “the beauty line” in the treatise of William Hogarth’s *The Analysis of Beauty*² from 1753” (Tsanev,

² William Hogarth writes a treatise that comments on the perfect S-shaped line and its ability to contain in itself all harmonic forms. The Analysis of Beauty is the first esthetic research paper. Hogarth’s idea becomes an attractive captivating explanation of the esthetic pleasure on the side of physiological esthetics and psychophysics of art in the XX century.

2008). Beauty changes into a purely subjective notion that is unable to obtain or accept even the slightest bit of extraneous influence. The intrusion of the personal pace of each individual and its subline choice is unacceptable. The encounter, the ecstasy from the moment of choosing is a deep personal act, strictly guarded and eternally covetous by every connoisseur. The first meeting with the subject of adoration and its patron is sacred; it is invisible but all the same real. In the single timeless moment, the style, period, technique, even the author is emptied of their importance. The choice has been made, so very much conscious as unconscious.

In their research *What Makes Great Art*, Andy Pankhurst and Lucinda Hawksley denote ten criteria, based on which they define the sense of a masterpiece in art (Pankhurst, Hawksley, 2012). They give characteristics and try to explain the power of the experience itself as a factor for greatness in art. They write about expressiveness, beauty, realism, form, narrative, dramatism, erotic, movement, deformation and symbolism in art. A specific interest for them is the chronology, through which they trace the initial and final indications, that conditions the distinct period of activeness for each one of the characteristics. For example with the most ancient dating system are defined the story lines in *Osiris welcoming Tutankhamu*³ and the realism, that is noticeable even in prehistoric paintings from around 14 000 B.C. After which gradually and progressively art becomes not simply an object, but it concerns matters of expressiveness, dramatism, form and beauty, which is highly concentrated with remarkable depth during the period between 15000 and 1900, emblematically closing this period with the painting *Portrait of a One-Eyed Man*⁴.

³ Osiris welcoming Tutankhamun is a fresco dating from app. 1357-49 B.C. Author unknown. The image is not considered to be authentic or representing real people, but it tells the story of Pharaoh's path and arrival to life after death.

⁴ Portrait of a One-Eyed Man is a painting by Vincent van Gogh from 1889, only a year before his suicide. The deformed face does not shock. It makes the public come back again and again, gazing, enjoying the unique extraordinary sense and artistic manner of van Gogh. After 1889 the colors in the painter's works changes to a lighter softer palette inspired by Provence.

	1400г.пр.Хр.	1000г.пр.Хр.	500г.пр.Хр.	0	500	1000	
1500	1600	1700	1800	1900			
	Expression						X
X			X	X			
	Beauty						X
X	X	X	X				
	Narrative						X
X		X			X		
	Dramatism						X
X			X	X			
	Erotic						X
X	X	X	X	X			
	Realism						X
X	X	X	X		X	X	
	Form						
X	X		X	X			
	Movement						
X		X	X				
	Deformation						X
X	X	X					
	Symbolism						
X			X	X			

It is remarkable that according to their study since the middle of 1800 until today the problematics of art are concerned mainly with expressing expressiveness, movement, deformation, form and symbolism. Exactly they are also the visual characteristics of modern art. This discovery, undoubtedly, leads to a responsible freedom of choice in the process of creating as well as

evaluating and accepting of art. It is the freedom to allow your personal pursuits, predispositions, experiences and sine qua non to choose without the fault of guilt, the object of their attention. This allows the buyer to exploit the momentum of the first meeting, to conclude the piece of art in his own personal, subjective and affable way and to rush it back to life as he wills. Today everyone can allow art – to make it such, only through his inner experiences.

Art happens within us. It bears the definition *great*, because it reaches within the soul, provoking a never-ending dialogue, present only for its owner. The fields of the unconscious, the affairs of the soul in dimensions of ancestral genotype provoke and exclude the unfulfilled spaces, *nothing box*⁵ moments or nugatory plies.

In 1924, the *Father* of surrealism André Breton⁶ finds it necessary to write First manifesto of surrealism, through which to give direction and definition of the movement, the idea, the philosophy or the path called surrealism (Cathrin Klingsöhr-Leroy, 2004). She writes the following: “SURREALISM. Noun: Pure psychic automatism by which it is intended to express, either verbally or in writing, or otherwise, the true function of thought. Thought dictated in the absence of all control exerted by reason, and outside all aesthetic or moral considerations.” Even the beginning of this manifesto transforms entirely the way a piece of art was created, interpreted and read. Those ideas based on Freud’s psychoanalytical searches, allow art to abruptly change its direction of development. The inner artistic need, the personal human irreconcilability, and the conscious lack of perception are fulfilled or at least began its need for change through new ideas.

Psychology and art meet in conscious unconsciousness. The purely visual bliss as a notion for quality art turns into history and the

⁵ *nothing box* – in English literary means a box filled with nothing. The term is used to describe a state of mind in which all processes of thinking and analyzing are absent.

⁶ André Breton- (from French) is a French writer and poet, one of the founders of Surrealism. Disturbed by the government of Vichy, Breton emigrates to the USA in 1946 and returns back to Paris after the end of World War II in 1946. Till his last day he encourages the development of a second group of surrealist during 1961-1965. He dies in Paris on 28 September 1966.

psychopathology – into the so desired pathway and the only reality needed to retain the answers so deeply sought. Dreams and their interpretations, memories, self-analytical observations, all of this is the so desired everyday of every artist, creating during the first half of 20th century. The clinics for mental illnesses gained vast popularity among the artistic round. They were not only a reference point, but even the art created by the mentally unstable turned into an example of an unreachable goal, growing in the image of super-art for the surrealist society. The fundamental characteristic of psychopathological artistry is that it does not bear any artistic or esthetical functions but entirely psychological. It is generally an expression of a secret world, unobtainable and unexplainable, ruled by the unconscious, functioning under its own inexplicable higher laws. The discovery that paintings created by the unconsciousness are leaders in interpretation, appreciation and perception of art, changes the way artists create, as well as the social justifications of art discernment. The masterpiece of a beautiful object, bound to all esthetic laws, is dressed in the mysterious, that we might call – artistic reality of an unseen world of the unreal, in its own reality, life, might and impression. Could it be that exactly in that line of thoughts, Giger's fears might turn to be a well justified objectivity? Is it mandatory to leave your sanity at the doorstep of controlled reality as a requirement on the way to genius? Are pathological images part of a higher form of existence or a random choice of unconscious impressions?

Carl Gustav Jung (1875-1961) has voluntarily decided to resign from pragmatism in its form of normal existence and to devote himself to these unconscious processes, allowing the spirited things, personal demons, fantasy figures and archetypic characteristics to lead him and freely speak (Jung, 1961). The process of submission is complete, but as he says – controlled. Entering deeper in the spiritual reality of his being his desire of returning to this so called normality declines. Understanding that this will turn him into a mad man by choice, living in fear and incapable to find the way back, he quits. Even so, he always chooses to go back to where he could control the process of

normality, as he gives a reasonable power to the unconscious. Dream interpretations, memories, perception of the journey to the archetypic prototype as part of his research, allow him to self-analyze, standing on the border of two realities without excluding the verity of any.

A definition of these ideas is given by Giorgio de Chirico (1888-1978) with his saying that a work of art must have neither common sense, nor logic. In this way it becomes closer to the dream and the child's soul.

From the ancient days people have communicated through images. Mythology and religion have been an immense characteristic of this imagery. Visualizing pathology, this turns to the only way out or the intermediate path between visualization of the unconscious unknown and the unknown beyond ourselves. The fear of living in a world created by someone else and not our own, encloses but also unlock a creativity unfamiliar to the academically educated artist. Overcoming the limitations, the norms and dogmas, turns the mad man in an image dressed in awe, a worthy priest, a conduit between the world of the natural and the supernatural. *The quiet madness* is perceived as a sign of genius anointing. That is a person worthy of awe and unconditional admiration.

The emblem of surrealism, the man who said for himself "I am Surrealism" – Salvador Dalí (1904-1989), allows himself to comment on the social receptivity in the following manner: "It is not me who is the clown, but this monstrously cynical and so unconsciously naive society, which plays the game of seriousness in order better to hide its madness." (Klingsöhr-Leroy, 2004).

Max Ernst (1891-1976) summarizes the artistic process in its every dimension with the words: "When the artist finds himself he is lost" (Klingsöhr-Leroy, 2004). It is an extravagant way, of unabated search, inexhaustible trembling of soul vibrations. It symbolizes a room with walls in a constant growing geometric progression, now letting the ever-bouncing ball of soulful tremors and artistic abilities to stop, because it has found the unconscious Perpetuum mobile of creativity and artistic creation.

Does the lie that Pablo Picasso (1881-1973) talks about, actually allows us to see the truth? That is exactly what artists believe in – the basis of modernist ideas in contemporary art. 20th century is characterized with insanity in art. They symbolize freedom, rebellion, fight and desire for transformation of social perception. Artists consciously choose the way of insanity in their quest for realistic spirituality in art. Provocation is not all. It is only a motive. The personal journey, the direction of self-realization, the search and rediscovery, turns the artist in a tour guide on the way to unconsciousness by choice.

To visualize an impression by dressing your thoughts in images, the dreams, the ideas and reflection-free thoughts, in the imagination of unconsciousness; The ability to create concepts, objects, spaces and forms, deprived of explainable reality, pictures that seem as much real as illogical for the subjective perception; The freedom of the artist to create his own way, without the pressure of limitations, where thoughts and mind are locked in a “box” of oblivion, precisely there the thought meets the unexplainable, so captivating and longed for. Then and then only connoisseur takes the step of choice, determined to reach to the other side and from a passive observer to become the owner of someone else’s emotions, abilities and past, to turn the object of his adoration into his future.

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