

ZORAN KUZMANOVIC'S SCULPTURES (PORTRAITS) IN 3BGD

The first thing that comes to mind when one mentions the artist Zoran Kuzmanovic-Kuzma is a foundry and a casting process. This means that he is closely connected with the material – metal, i.e. different physical conditions of metal and the energy necessary for transformations of matter.

It comes as no surprise then that his thought process, and therefore his artistic position and the language he uses, are closely bound up with metal, casting, form, volume, and other elements related to classical sculpture.

Several weeks ago a number of our art cooperative members visited his studio in Jugovo, on which occasion we saw, for the first time, what the work Kuzma had chosen for the 3BGD exhibition looked like in reality, and it was then that we realised that those were actually three works closely related. All three works were reflections on human countenance. It was immediately clear that Kuzma had entered a new field of artistic exploration. The sculpting, i.e. casting, process was merely a means for articulating visual expression and approaching the human shape.

These works pointed to three new important elements in his artistic position: firstly, they stem from a conceptual approach to artistic thought; secondly, besides the matter and playing with it, an important element is the tension it creates in the installations; thirdly, these works are intentionally connected with a certain space, making it a spatial installation.

The reason why we could talk about a conceptual approach is simply that the sculpture is assembled from movable, changeable and adaptable parts. We could say that behind this there must have been an engineering and constructionist thought process. The human countenance he has been dealing with for a long time becomes only a metaphor in the process of the development of expression. Depiction, volume, examination of character, even the form, seem to have been moved to the background.

The three sculptures, three portraits-profiles, form one almost inseparable series. They could be said to form one installation which consists of three parts. The first human countenance is a rounded silhouette, a profile, i.e. a "metal" edge of a human face which can be passed through as through a gate. This profile is intentionally thrown off balance and brought back again through tight metal cables (lines), which, helped by counterweights on the walls, the ceiling and the pillar in the shape of tears or a simple brick, keep the portrait in a new balance, this time in the context of a strong tension. The second sculpture is the same profile of a human face, with additional, surprising elements (polished brassy mouth and transparent epoxidic mouth), stretched into a line between the pillar and the wall. The viewer sees the profile stretching between two surfaces, thus causing a new tension. The third sculpture or the third part of the installation is a portrait – a profile stretching from the wall on one side, and from the floor on the other, a line of cables being between them, bringing the whole composition into a third type of tension.

The entire installation can neither be viewed nor read as a collection of separate sculptures. On the contrary, in an artistically skillful way, Kuzma makes us look at it all as a whole. The space between the segments of the installation is not empty. It functions as his artistic expression. Interspaces, rhythms, symmetries, logic and tensions point to a high awareness of the importance of the

exhibition space. In this case, among others, Kuzma shows to the viewers an architectural thought process as well!

Based on all these premises, Third Belgrade reacted artistically to Rados Antonijevic's proposal. Obviously, Kuzma's studio-foundry is on the Danube as well as the utopian gallery of Third Belgrade. The place that the works originated from and the place of their exhibition being connected by the most powerful river of Europe, it was promptly decided to be logical to transport Kuzma's works to the gallery by boat on a symbolic Danube art route, and to have it recorded by the chosen observer, Veljko Pavlovic. The journey and the 3BGD video are a response to a very intelligent and sensitive impulse of the artist Zoran Kuzmanovic Kuzma.

Planned in advance, attentively and strategically, the observation of the journey, metaphorically speaking, becomes a document, similar to the one of performing "The Collective Dream" by the Third Belgrade art cooperative, which was also a kind of artistic response to the exhibition of a Russian group called Collective Action. That document, the video material, the result of observing an artistic effect, is turned into an artistic expression in its own right, in the form of a video, by the chosen observer.

The triologue is rounded off in this way, by action and without words, among Kuzma, who is the creator of the work of art and the exhibition, the Third Belgrade art cooperative, which responds to the impulse and reacts by providing feedback on Kuzma, and the observer Veljko Pavlovic, who creates a third element out of the dialogue, thus making a new reality, in his own words, because what is not recorded does not exist.

Selman Trtovac, June 2012