



Lucijan Bratuš, s, 70, 02, 95 x 95.

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LUCIJAN BRATUŠ, SODOBNI DON KIHOT

ČE JE TVOJE OKO ČISTO ...

V svoji pronicljivi analizi propada evropske kulture, resignirano naslovljeni »Kako smo izgubili Zahod« (How the West was lost, 2006) Alexander Boot ob razmisleku o modernistični umetnosti ugotavlja: »Zahodni človek je to, kar je bil, navsezadnje postal natanko zaradi svoje zmožnosti osredotočiti se na bistvo stvari, ne na njihovo zunanjo lupino. Nič napačnega ni zatorej v razširjanju meja tonalnosti ali harmonije, nič takega, čemur bi lahko ugovarjali, se ne nahaja v razbijanju in ponovnem sestavljanju naravnih oblik v konstitutivne elemente – dokler za vsemi temi ekspanzijami, razbijanji in ponovnimi sestavitvami pač ni izgubljen sam smisel umetnosti. Izvoren in poslednji smisel zahodne umetnosti je namreč v tem, da se izrazi duša zahodnega človeka, da se prek nje zatrdi, da ta duša obstaja – in da zato obstaja Bog. Dejstvo, da se je na začetku dvajsetega stoletja ta smisel bodisi izgubil ali pa je bil vsaj suspendiran, je imelo posledice, ki so bili dosti širši od umetnosti – in so jih naredili očitne topovi Verduna in Ypresa.« (str. 243)

Na začetku enaindvajsetega stoletja so – ob bobnenju novih orožij – sledi tega boja za dušo paradoksnopazne ravno v delih umetnikov, ki se navezujejo na modernistično revolucijo, a so jih nove umetniške prakse in tehnologije postavile v vlogo »konservativcev«. Lucijan Bratuš sodi med te sodobne donkihote.

Slike na sploh lahko govorijo o tem, kar smo videli na svojih poteh ali nam je bilo izročeno – ali pa o Niču vid(e)nega, o drugosti, ki privlači in plaši vsakega popotnika. In vendar vedno govorijo predvsem o slikarjevem „pogledu“. O pogledu duše, ki je ves svet – in zato njen pogled pomeni zmožnost razbiranja nevidnih oblik. Bratuševe grafike razkrivajo bogastvo notranjih možnosti nekega zrenja. Vanj vstopa celota sveta. Vse, kar privlači slikarjevo oko, bitja in notranje prikazni v vsej svoji nedoločenosti in mnogopomenskosti. Umetnik temu prihajanju sledi nepretenciozno, brez pretvarjanja, da sporoča kakršen koli dokončen uvid v skrivnost bivanja ali odgovor na poslednja vprašanja, a vendar z izrazito odločnostjo, s ščepcem pretanjenega humorja in kaligrafske nonšalantnosti.

Prav izkustvo kaligrafa je odločilno tudi za Bratuša kot grafika: v svojih stvaritvah nikoli ne pozablja tisočletne verige skrivnostnih upredmetenj človeškega duha, porojenih iz napetosti med nujo simbola in svobodnostjo simboliziranja,

med nepredvidljivim videnjem kaligrafske ustvarjalnosti in neizprosno izročila, med obiljem pomenljivega in jedkostjo racionalizacije. Lepo–pis, priklincevanje lepote s pomočjo nepredvidljivih krasitev in zaobrnitev pisave, zanj namreč ni le frivolno poigravanje z možnostmi zapisa, ujetnica potrebe in poljubnosti, ampak ob–likujoč odziv na skrivnostno, izmikajoče se samorazkrivanje Absolutnega, sočloveka in sveta. Kaligrafsko oblikovanje, igra s premenami, prelivanji in prehajanji raznih črk zapisu odvzame njegovo samorazumljivost – in obenem problematizira pomensko izpraznjenost »čiste« podobe v grafiki. Likovna igra nas nepojmovno vodi do skrivnosti Besede. Logosa, ki je obenem arhetipska Podoba. Bratušu pri tem ne gre za uvajanje v kakršno koli esoteriko, temveč za podobe, ki jih pozna vsakdo, za srečanja, ki so v globini istovetna z nami samimi. Pred nas, ki nam ni dobro, če bivamo sami, zato seveda stopa predvsem uzrta skrivnost sočloveka: obraz deklice in obličje moža, golo telo ženske. Celu Bratuševi demoni niso perzijsko–poznoujudovska ali novozavezna sfera duhovnega zla, temveč prej grške sile vmesnosti med božanskim in človeškim, arhaični daímones; prek njih in v njih se vidni svet raztaplja v plesu prepletenih arhetipov, nravno ambivalentnih, zapeljivih in razigranih, divjih in le včasih nevarnih. V čem je ob tej neprikriti svetnosti pravzaprav „reševanje duše“ v tej grafični umetnosti? Paradokсно prav v zadržanosti, v sramežljivosti umetnikovega pogleda. Z osebno pisavo, kaligrafsko stilizacijo lastnega obzorja, umetnik dopušča vstopanje vsega v njegovi drugosti. Občuteni *mysterium tremendum et fascinans* – skrivnost, ki zbuja strah, a nas obenem privlači – vodi pogled k stiku s predmetnostjo na drugi ravni. Večpomenskost vidnega igrivo usmerja k poslednji vedrini, ki ni več njegova stvar. Morda je to „preprosto oko“ evangeljske prilike: pogled, zaradi katerega ves telesni svet postaja „svetal“. In vendar prav skromna nezaupljivost do „teurgično“ prevrednotene umetnosti navsezadnje, skozi tančice vseh svetov, sramežljivo dvigne pogled h Križanemu in Vstalemu. In tedaj lahko – nazaj, skozi omahujoče, sramežljivo pogledovanje, skozi vztrajno, trmasto ponavljanje potez – spoznamo Strukturo, ki kljub vsemu nosi vse Lucijanove „svetne“ like v njihovi navidezni breztemeljnosti in razpetosti nad praznino. Preprosto oko v svoji izraziti o–sebnosti odkriva Božjo agápe v globini vsega. In izpričuje dušo, ki ostaja, najsi to hočemo ali ne.

IF YOUR EYE IS PURE ...

Alexander Boot in his sharp analysis of the decline of European culture, resignedly titled 'How the West was Lost' (2006), in his pondering on the art of modernity claims the following:

»Westman, after all, became what he was precisely because of his ability to concentrate on the essence of things rather than their outer shell. There is nothing wrong in expanding the limits of tonality or harmony, nothing objectionable in dissecting and rearranging physical shapes into constituent elements — provided that the purpose of art is not lost behind all those expansions, dissections and rearrangements. The original and ultimate purpose of Western art was to express Westman's soul, stating that it exists and therefore God exists. That by the beginning of the twentieth century this purpose had been either lost or put on hold conveyed implications that went much broader than art, implications made clear by the guns of Verdun and Ypres.' (p. 243)

The traces of this battle for the soul are, at the beginning of the twenty-first century — alongside the booming of new weapons — paradoxically noticeable precisely in the work of artists who are tied to the modernist revolution, yet the new art practices and technology have placed them in the role of 'conservatives'. Lucijan Bratuš belongs amongst these contemporary Don Quixotes.

Paintings can generally talk about what we have seen on our paths or was presented to us — or about the Nothingness of the visible / seen, about the otherness that attracts and intimidates every traveller. Yet still they talk mainly about the painter's 'vision', about a vision of the soul, which is the whole world — and that is why this vision means the ability to comprehend invisible forms. Bratuš's prints unveil the riches of the inner possibilities of perception; into it the whole of the world enters, everything that attracts the painter's eye, beings and inner apparitions in all their uncertainty and multiple meanings. The artist follows this intrusion without any pretentious belief that he can express the ultimate cognition of the mystery of being or answer the final questions, yet with a distinctive determination, with a pinch of subtle humour and calligraphic nonchalance.

Precisely the experience of the calligrapher is decisive for Bratuš as a print-maker too: in his creations he never forgets the thousand-year-old chain of mysterious objectifications of the human spirit, born from tensions between the necessity of the symbol and freedom to symbolise, between the unpredictable vision of calligraphic creativity and the inexhorability of tradition, between the abundance of significance and the causticity of rationalisation. 'Beautiful handwriting', the summoning of beauty with the help of unpredictable adornings and inversions of writing is, to him, not just a frivolous play with the possibilities of the written record, not just captive to the necessary and the arbitrary, but a

form-giving response to the mysterious, elusive self-disclosure of the Absolute, fellow man and the world. The calligraphic design, playing with alternations, iridescences and traverses of various letters, takes from the written record its self-understanding – and at the same time problematizes the semantic emptiness of the ‘pure’ image in prints.

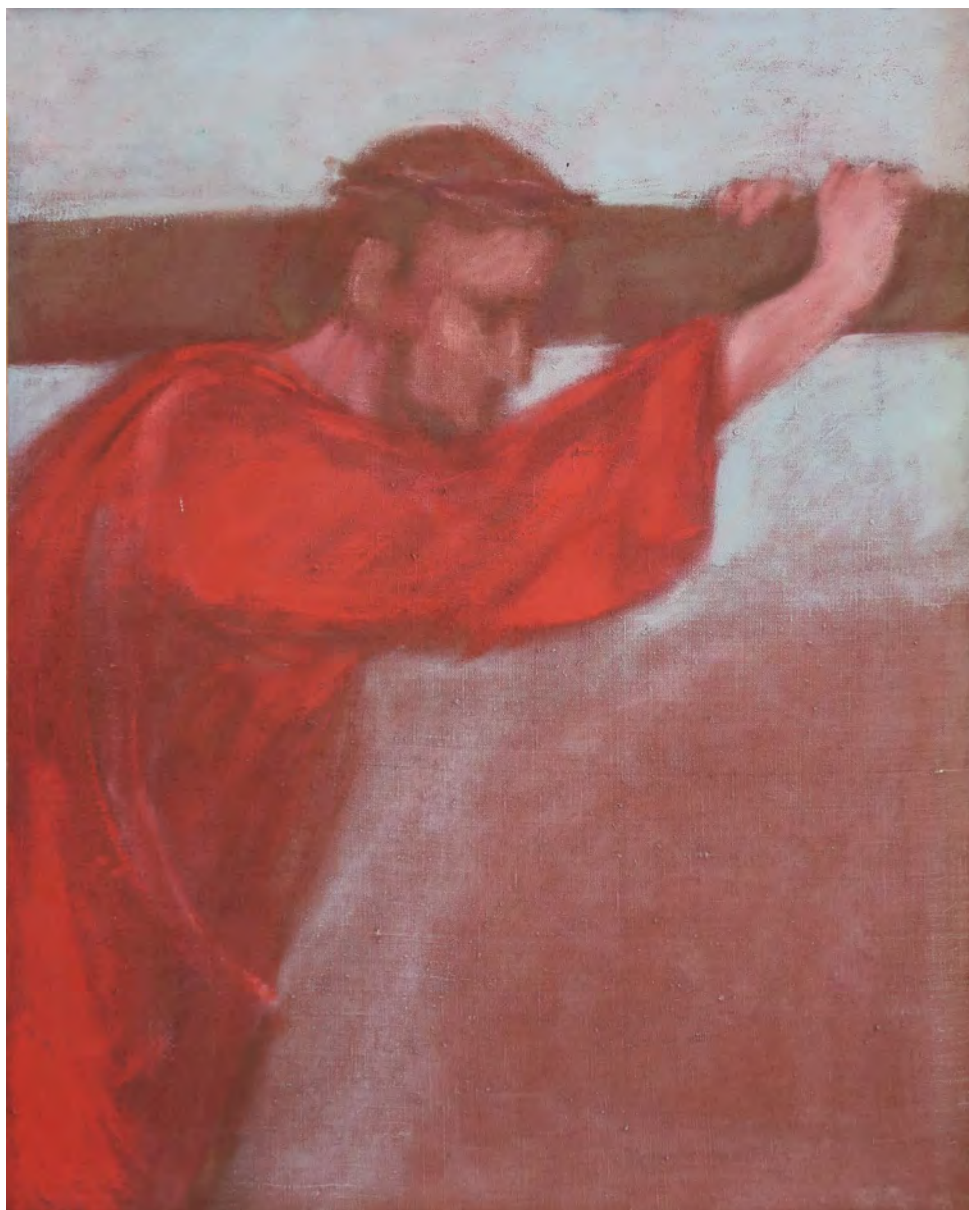
The fine art game leads us non-notionally into the mystery of the Word; of the Logos that is at the same time archetypal Image. It is not about an introduction into any kind of esoterics for Bratuš, but about images that everybody knows, about the encounters that are in the depths identical with ourselves. Therefore to us, who are not well if we are alone, the visible mystery of our fellow man is revealed: the face of a young girl and visage of a man, the naked body of a woman. Bratuš’s demons do not belong to Late-Persian Jewish or the New Testament sphere of spiritual evil, but are rather Greek powers of the intermediator between the divine and human, archaic daímones; across them and in them the visual world dissolves into the dance of the interwoven archetypes, morally ambivalent, charming and playful, wild and only now and then dangerous. With such unconcealed worldliness, where actually is a ‘salvation of the soul’ within this printmaking? Paradoxically, precisely in the restraint, the modesty of the artist’s vision. The artist allows, with his personal writing, calligraphic stylization of his own horizon, the All in its otherness to enter. A perceived *mysterium tremendum et fascinans* — mystery that rouses fear and attracts us at the same time — leads the vision into contact with the subjectivity on another level. Multiple meanings of the observed playfully direct to a final serenity, which is not its concern anymore. Maybe this ‘simple eye’ is of the gospel’s parable: a vision for which the whole of the material world is becoming ‘full of light’. And yet precisely this modest mistrust in the ‘theurgic’ revalued art after all, through the veils of all worlds, modestly rises to the vision of the Crucified and Resurrected. And then — backwards, through the wavering, modestly reviewed, through the persisting, obstinate repetition of strokes — we can recognize the Structure, which carries all Bratuš’s ‘worldly’ figures in their apparent groundlessness and spreading above the vacuum. The simple eye in its distinctive sense-of-self discovers God’s *agápe* in the depth of everything. And testifies the soul that stays, whether we want it or not.



Lucijan Bratuš, poliptih, 1979.



Lucijan Bratuš, 1981, kp, 01, 48 x 58 cm.



Lucijan Bratuš, 1981, kp, 02, 48 x 58 cm.



Lucijan Bratuš, 1981, kp, 04, 48 x 58 cm.



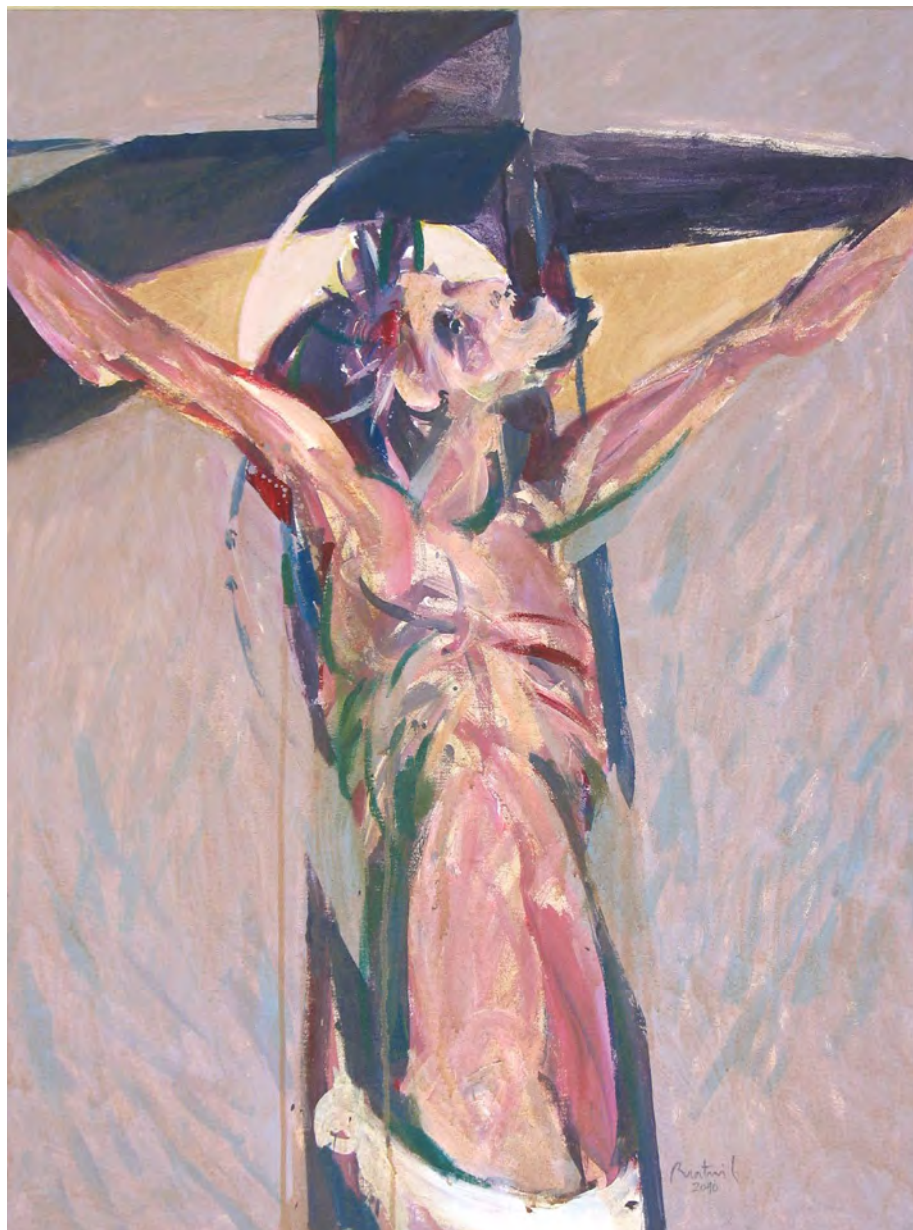
Lucijan Bratuš, 1981, kp, 06, 48 x 58 cm.



Lucijan Bratuš, 1981, kp, 13, 48 x 58 cm.



Lucijan Bratuš, 1981, kp, 14, 48 x 58 cm.



Lucijan Bratuš, Mb, Ars, S, 15, 70 x 90 cm.



Lucijan Bratuš, Pt–1991–04, akril platno, 183 x 138 cm.



Lucijan Bratuš, 1981, g, 88, 11.



Lucijan Bratuš, Križani, g, 70, 19.



Lucijan Bratuš, 1978, 48 x 58 cm.