



Veronika Holcová: Analysis of Purgatory

March 8 – April 21, 2024

Curatorial collaboration: Petr Vaňous

Trafo Gallery cordially invites you to the newly prepared solo exhibition of the artist Veronika Holcová which will present paintings and drawings intertwining two different expressive worlds of the author. The opening will take place on Thursday 7 March from 7pm at Trafo Gallery. The guided tour together with the launch of the publication for the exhibition will take place on Wednesday 10 April from 6pm. The first twenty copies will be supplemented with an author's drawing. The exhibition was created in curatorial collaboration with Petr Vaňous. You can find more information at trafogallery.cz.

Veronika Holcová's paintings and drawings grow out of association. The automatic commencement and rhythm of the changes of associations expressed by colour, drawing or the impressions left by painting tools is suspended and corrected at a certain stage of its spontaneous proliferation by the artist's imagery. Signs, symbols, material and animal attributes, and diverse figures are woven into the changing "fluid" framework, appearing and disappearing in equal measure. Their status is already ambiguous in their present blurring. Everything undergoes a kind of unsettling transformation.

Two distinct expressive worlds intermingle in each work. A dynamic world made up of associations, and a static world represented by figuration. Each painting and drawing develops a particular plot or storyline that either has a clearly defined epicentre, symmetrical monumentality or overwhelms the viewer with a deliberately exalted opacity. The picture plane is reminiscent of dreamlike or climatic situations that are in constant flux, in which the haziness is sometimes transparent, crystalline clear, sometimes dramatically plastic, but always highly illusory and unstable in its illusoriness.

In the title of the exhibition, Analysis of Purgatory, there is a reference to the painting Purgatory, a large-scale work in which the pictorial plane is transformed into a topography of transitory flight between the symbolic polarities of heaven and hell. We find ourselves in a cultural and civilisational space defined by certain ethical principles, whose axes symbolically and metaphorically define the limits of our perception. If we wanted to grasp this "space" rationally and analyse it methodically, it would constantly elude us since its aggregates and interfaces are not stable. Purgatory is a metaphor of the transformation that is closest to the climatic situation. Change can only be analysed analogically, through figurative language in its movement. It is movement that lends the illusion of Holcová's paintings that unreal ambivalent feature in which the solid melts and the liquid solidifies, the inorganic comes to life and the organic crystallises, where the colourful and shimmering ominously seduce the eye and repay curiosity with the bitter poison of knowledge. Purgatory is chaos before polarisation, or better still, in the midst of polarisation, a place of new hopes and irreversible falls. If only the place! Rather a nebula, a vapour of red-hot magma. A geologically unreliable, unclear and opaque terrain that can be shaped into anything. In purgatory, direction is temporarily lost. It only reappears after the viewer enters it.

VERONIKA HOLCOVÁ (*1973, Prague) studied in 1993–2000 at the Academy of Fine Arts in Prague (drawing studio – J. Svobodová, painting studio – B. Dlouhý, V. Skrepl, graphics studio – V. Kokolia). Since 1997, she has had a number of solo exhibitions in the Czech Republic and abroad. Her works are represented in private and public collections in the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Canada, Switzerland, Italy, Germany, France, Great Britain, China and the USA. In 2015, she founded and until 2019 led the G1718 gallery at the Czech Embassy in Ottawa, Canada as curator. In 2015, the Trigon publishing house published a book of her drawings At Hand with texts by five writers. She is currently participating in the gallery program at Prostor Olga in Strašnice.

We thank our partners for supporting Trafo Gallery: Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic, Capital City of Prague, Canadian Medical, ČEZ Group, Seznam.cz, Prague Public Transit Company, Art District 7, Radio Color, Radio 1 and Wine4You.

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