

Dejan Grba ***Diorama***

Strictly taken, writing on drawing can hardly make any sense. Language and drawing are essentially confronted and mutually exclusive, even if merged in common life. The discrepancy between alphabetic and pictographic cultures, with all the picturesque varieties in the character and mentality of their subjects, is conceptual in nature and has nothing to do with the ideas of 'evolution' or 'progress' that the western civilization uses to rationalize it.

As an immediate warning, as an announcement, the speech is a key factor of social violence. Although every civilization (and communication) is based on some sort of violence, drawing is a medium of minimum aggression because it is a kind of infinitesimal event. As opposed to the hypnotic linearity of speech that requires auditor's continual attention, the meaning in drawing is expressed discreetly, through the informal activity of the beholder. While the essence of speech rests in the obedient reproduction of grammatical, phonetic and other rules, the drawing is based on non-verbal thinking, implies no particular meaning and allows the luxury of interpretation. In order to somehow justify itself by suggesting its limitations, the speech on drawing should be exceedingly abstract and open for interactive self-refinement.

Drawings in Borislav Krbavac's series *Pro Thesis* 'speak' of drawing with concern whose motivation and vague emotional background hover on the edge of plausibility. Their seemingly dominating reflexiveness functions in fact as a semi-transparent screen, a diorama for an unpretentious shadow play. This play, however, can end in annihilation and that is what brings it back to 'reality' or, rather, to our ideologically conditioned notion of it.

Although contextualized by semantic and iconographic factors of alchemy, the sign in Krbavac's drawings is not an emblem of some self-conscious authority that this great tradition could indicate. Quite contrary, with language and lettering he introduces an ironic evidence of femininity as a sly, instinctive rather than intuitive conspirator in an unspoken game of sexes. The mutual conditioning, deceit and seduction of sexes is symbolized by teasing the sign and formalized in a juxtaposition of opaque and transparent areas. Conscious, slightly inarticulate, geometric imperfections stand for the inconsistency of ultimate masculinity that, uttering all its prerogatives of appeal and potency, stubbornly remains in abstinence. Feminine pleasure in compulsion, and masculine pleasure in the uncertainty of rebellion are fused in a pathetic sway of genital sexuality.

Boris Krbavac, *Pro-Thesis*, exhibition catalogue, Dom omladine Gallery, Belgrade, 2001.