

ITALIAN WANDERS

For a long period of time it was almost impossible for an artist to introduce himself, only if he realised his so-called wander. The destination was usually Italy, getting acquainted with some new artistic procedures and trades through Czech Republic with friend artistic-sculptor Jan Zemanek.

Not only the artists but, let's say, intellectuals set out for tours around Italy hoping to see the spirits of ancient civilisation. On the opposite, Italian tradesmen, in their period usually called "Vlach people", travelled to barbarian "countries over the Alps and established colonies extending new artistic styles and methods.

It is the theme of wandering or vagabondaggio and also attraction by Italy that is the element connecting the graphic art collection of Roberto Formigoni and the sculptures of Jan Zemanek.

Both of the artists often sympathise with looking for inspiration by the world of literature. For Roberto Formigoni it is especially work of Herman Hesse, above all let's mention his novel "Narcis and Goldmund", for Jan Zemanek it's the idol of beat generation - Jack Kerouac and his "On the road". We cannot pass the inspiration by the world of literature and must mention the activity of Italian musician and designer Agostino Daolio, whose graphics were introduced to the public couple of years ago in Novy Jicin, especially the hit "Io vagabondo" of his Nomadi group.

Turning back to the beginning of our essay in the years of Italian cinquecento (16th century), we cannot miss "paragone", which is arguing about what kind of art is in the privileged position. Finally the argument, occupying many generations of art theorists and artists, was solved by considering the drawing "disegno" as the winner. And that means not only "disegno" as an art technique, but also as a vision of "the internal, spiritual drawing". Today it would be probably called the concept. This vision of "the internal drawing" was claimed for the first time by Leonardo da Vinci. Later, in Italian world of art, on the bases of these thoughts, comes some mysticism of "disegno". Being fully absorbed in the graphic art of ROBERTO FORMIGONI we can find out that despite of using many of art techniques and after all colours as well, his excellent expression remains as the main feature. Formigoni combines different techniques in his works, especially lithography with free minded, water-colour painting. Briskly formed drawing and painting is used in contrast with colours laid on by spattering. Thanks to perforation, collage and assemblage, graphics get contact with space.

The motto of Formigoni's work is wanderer "Globetrotter" and a wandering comedian "Il pagliaccio". For him, literature is not only the origin of inspiration but it often gets in the graphics in the form of written text. We cannot pass massive work of analogous motives in so-called "Murales". As Formigoni's court critic Alberto Chiappani supposes: "Reality by him never crosses imagination and is still present at the ideological concept, which is introspective and sentimental to all intents and purposes".

The motive of wandering in the style of wanderers is closely connected with asceticism and self-denial. We can find the way to ascetical type of expression in the work of JAN ZEMANEK in several levels all at once.

Abandoning figure sculptures and replacing them by abstract expressions is very clear here. A turning point in this conversion seems to be a sculptural symposium in Balbido, Italy especially the local obelisks with letters X and M (in Roman style 10 and 1000). Thanks to their technique, which is drilling, the obelisks tribute to the end of the second millennium, where our civilisation successfully squeezed its way.

The conversion to asceticism (better minimalism) is possible to see in a usage of "inartistic" technology and materials; for example a manufactured plywood substitutes a wooden part. Colour effects are also minimized, mostly in sculptures called "High pressure".

The third dimension is put down by a frequent usage of low-lying relieves. Neither plywood "Leaves", thanks to perforating tilting a part of their surface, are in contact with space. Perforation evidently follows a pioneer of this technique, who is, of course Lucio Fontana. Unusually interesting is this method: stratification of plywood creating a sculpture. For the first time stratification appears in a collection "Massifs". We can consider it as converting old, expressive (classically cut out) relieves of Beckyd landscape into abstract positions. These relieves and atypical dimensions of "Pyramids" with their original meaning are connected with the obelisks, as mentioned above.

Abandoning certain technological details, useful for more impressive artistic look of the objects, gradually gets in the monumental collection "The wanderers". It is specially clear in the moment of comparing a self-portrait "Wanderer in a beret", which is still classically cut out, with those wanderers created by perforation of plywood, like in the collection "Leaves".

The wanderers created in a connection with the sculptural symposium in Balbido (Italy) mean imaginary break in artist's work. As an attachment is considered a "normalized" form of lower part of the body, on the opposite, the upper parts have a dynamic motion. A wide crotch (shape of esilon turned upside down) gives us an impression of unstableness, and as Elisabeth Doniselli, Italian historian of art, supposes, it is "an expression of living fortuity" of the wanderers.

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