

maria cristina carlini

Maria Cristina Carlini.

A consonance of archetypal monumental volumes

Site specific sculpture in public urban spaces is a challenge and a confusing task for a creative artist. Abandoning his inhabited atelier and indrawn spaces of exhibition halls he breaks free from the ghetto of his creative visions to the public. Then, finding himself in the city pulsating with historical past and present pace he has to conquer the spectator imprisoned in every day routines and consumerism standards. He needs to attract his attention and to impose the public to hear the message of the contemporary artwork.

In my case, when looking at Maria Cristina Carlini's artworks, one more dimension becomes of great importance – namely, the geopolitical one. As the matter of fact, public life of the Eastern European citizen in the city before the fall of the Berlin Wall was strictly regulated by official representational rituals and symbols*. The power (vitality) of these canons can yet be grasped today, when sculpture in the city is still identified with commemoration of some event or hero. Therefore, we envision each manifestation of non-representation art in public spaces with special piety and attention.

While creating a plastic narration in public places of the city Maria Cristina Carlini relies on intuitive or inborn patronizing female/maternal creative capacity rather than a warlike rebellious Promethean power. She concentrates not on heroes and their victories/events but landmarks of the past witnessing universal values nowadays. The artist rethinks in a subtle way or so to say produces Postmodern remixes of the experiences in the heritage of the ancient culture of the Mediterranean Sea Region, or predawn Italian modernism, dynamism by the Futurists (Umberto Boccioni), or Minimalists (Anthony Caro).

As if it was in the operatic stage settings – in the historical surroundings of various European cities the artist installs the sculptural objects interrelating among themselves, based on associative and controversial expression keys. The content of their message should be considered as a consonance of archetypal monumental volumes (the umbrella like, open sphere of a circle, the stable colonnade, dynamic ladders of pyramidal spaces, the elegiac gesture of „La Vittoria di Samotracia“) in the urban texture. Of special importance there can be the experience of functional vessel, three-dimensional construction of clay, organic substances fragility of which in contact with fire determines emergence of a new solid substance.

Maria Cristina Carlini's shift from functional ceramics towards the sculpture objects installed in public urban spaces predetermines the unconventional relationship of the artist based on the principle of unity of the opposites to the materials chosen for the creation and

application of objects. As a skilful cook boiling a soup of nothing with intuition characteristic to female logics putting together various materials (birch trunks, old wooden beam) and industrial (polished steel covered with rust) substances creates plastic objects in terms of plasticity and energy representing masculine monumentality.

Powerful and associative artworks of expressive volumes by Maria Cristina Carlini when placed in public urban spaces do not turn out to be monuments to particular event or hero but rather site specific objects, pulsating with dynamism of the 21st century witnessing the signs of the past in the present.

* The plastic symbol of the Soviet Union by Vera Muchina, a sculpture "Worker and Collective Farmer" in 1937 was a decoration to the pavilion of the World Expo in Paris, and later was moved to Moscow, and around for a half of a century was a landmark for the entrance to the Exhibition of the Development of the brotherly nations (ВДНХ), and upon disintegration of the empire based on power positions, was deconstructed, and the interior of the plastic construction made of polished steel panels for a while served as an asylum to the homeless. Today the country attempting to enhance her political powers is preoccupied with the reconstruction of this plastic symbol.

Elona Lubyte