

Press release - VESKO GAGOVIĆ

Vesko Gagović was born in 1963 in Niksic (Montenegro), an important cultural centre. He graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts in Sarajevo in 1988, where he also obtained his Masters in Painting in 1991. Sarajevo was the city where he made his first personal exhibition in 1990, as well as numerous group exhibitions in various cities between 1988 and 2018, including Podgorica, Venice, Vienna, concluding with a retrospective at the Museums and Galleries of Podgorica in 2018 and in 2019 was representative of Montenegro in the official Pavilion at the 58th Biennale from Venice.

His pictorial work translates into an abstract language that could easily have given the impression of an artist involved in the debate on the "end of painting" or on the "last painting". But a careful observation of the solutions chosen by Gagović reveals that his minimalist work is performed as a pictorial manual practice, made in thick, raised layers of colour, in which he introduces barely visible vertical stripes. By arranging these paintings in identical square formats at equal distances from each other, in a series or opting for unusual arrangements (one next to the other, one below or above the other), Gagović achieves the effect of a pictorial environment, therefore opposing the norm of the exhibition practice, on the track of the knowledge that the space and the methodology of setting up are never neutral, but can and must be an active and integral factor of the artistic presentation.

Gagović creates an illusionistic image that acts on reality, transforming it, and therefore becomes a reality in itself. The project of floating objects (exhibited at the 58th Venice Biennale 2019) leads us through the archetypal use of shapes, colours (gold) and light beyond the concept of time. The artist's inspiration finds its starting point in the film "2001: A Space Odyssey" by Stanley Kubrick, which deals with human evolution, the idea of the existence of intelligent extraterrestrial life and its possible impact on life terrestrial. The Monolith symbolises the highest human ideal, whose boundaries are always out of reach, but which is always a source of inspiration for personal development and attempts to achieve it. Inspired by the socialisation process and social relationships, as well as by the considerable developments of technology and its impact on human life - especially in the field of communication development - the artist Vesko Gagović creates a work that reports his reflections on the subject, with possible solutions and causes, as well as on interpersonal relationships.

Form is a main constituent of this work; form that, coloured, takes on plastic, conceptual and associative meanings and establishes the relationship between the tangible and the intangible, the real and the fantastic. Characterised by a pure and somewhat reduced visuality, the manifested world of primitive forms, thanks to its light and ethereal being, challenges gravitational forces, irresistibly rising towards the celestial peaks of the human spirit.

Contained in terms of mass and volume, form becomes the symbol and vehicle of the energy field which, in synergy with the surrounding space, maintains the unity of idea and expression, subject and object. A neon light emanates from within them, thus conveying a powerful sensation of allusiveness. Objects are empty - emptiness is experienced as a space of the spirit, of contemplation and an acute awareness of the beauty of transience. It represents the singularity of the absent space, its metaphysical qualities and the separation of the spirit from the material world and a meditation on the relationship between the artist, the work of art and the observer. The elements that create the volume appear as old as the Monolith, introducing, in addition to the usual three, also the fourth dimension, that of time (linear), in fact. Canceling it. In its important dimensions, this collection of works symbolises a victory over heaviness and leads to ascension, challenge, optimism - like a sort of Monolith of our times.