

Romanian Context: From Pop-Art to genuine design

Artist: Teodor Graur

November 9th – December 13th 2011

”The author is „specialised” in local context ...

Even though context is an exhaustive term, the dimension of this exhibition is miniatural and imposes a limitation, hence I do not intend to do a general overview. Nevertheless, it is worth pointing out certain aspects and a qualitative transformation that has occurred in the past few years.

The two (contrasting) sides corresponding to the two registers that make up the show – down and up – are manners of approaching the local context differently in 20 years’ time gap, even if they are carried out by the same prevalent medium: installation. The earlier works used image as their basis (painting, photography, collage), while the current ones are object and construction – outcome of synthesis based on the acquired experience; there also were, especiall in the 90s, several performance works aiming at producing a certain gesture – expression of attitude ... Now the gesture is in the object itself. And the two different démarches, distanced in time, are displayed together.

My art has been contextual, always focusing on a Romanian, but also Eastern-European or Balkanic problem. There are inherited things that bear an effect in contemporaneity and raise the community’s interest.

Kitsch has often motivated me, mainly in the early works, in painting and photography, when I wanted to show the viewers a mirror. Lately, though, after having passed through various stages, after having revisited certain meditation and cultural landmarks, my interests have centered on construction concepts materialised in objects and installations, as I am fascinated by the design field. ”Master of Balkania” – an alter ego – has statements to make where work is done with essence, substance, symbol, expression and synthesis, due to the fact that he is gifted with wit, smartness and humour – necessary skills in a competition. Design implies one more thing: the delimitation from bad taste, which does not happen in contemporary art in general. Style is only one step away! Therefore, I think the Romanian context has improved: it is no longer only sentimental, pathetic, kitsch, melodramatic, etc., but can also be aesthetic and spiritual! This is what the current show is all about.” (Teodor Graur)

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Teodor Graur (b. Pogaceaua, Mures, Romania) lives and works in Bucharest. He graduated the Belle Arte Institute of Bucharest in 1978. His most recent and important shows include: “Mirajul politic” at Totem Gallery (Venice 2011), “Remodern” at Anticariat Curtea Veche Gallery (Bucharest 2010), “Balcanian XXI” at Romanian Peasant Museum (Bucharest 2011), ”When History Comes Knocking” at Plan B Gallery (Berlin, 2010). Some of his works feature in the collections of the National Museum of Contemporary Art (Bucharest), Ludwig Museum (Budapest), Essl Collection (Viena), Nächst St. Stephan Gallery (Viena), private collections. Parteneri: Public Advisor, Johnnie Walker

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