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MAD TIMES

Authorial ways of conveying content in gravure and convex printing techniques.

SUMMARY

“Mad Times. Authorial ways of conveying content in gravure and convex printing techniques” is a commentary to a set of works made in traditional workshop graphic art techniques, the subject of which is a wide spectrum of human fears, which I mention in the introduction to the work (chapter one).

The second chapter was devoted to the substantive aspect of the works – from explaining the very name of the cycle (Mad Times), through outlining the general concept and placing it in a specific context and suggesting to the viewer the symbolism/content of individual works, to the description of individual graphics. While discussing the idea behind me, I emphasized which of the fears, both interpersonal and social, interest me as a creator the most: fear of lack of acceptance, evaluation, trust, love, loneliness, (...). I have mentioned the pyramid of Maslov's needs, the role of mass media in creating an artificial image of an ideal society (and thus deepening fears and complexes) and the search for ambiguous symbols and tearing them out of their original context.

By listing numerous sources of inspiration, I have stressed the role of music and sacred art in the process of work on the project. In sacred art, I was interested in its visual value, stripped of literary and religious values. While creating the presented series, I eagerly used images of Our Lady, Christ, amoras and the attributes attributed to them, but I placed them in a completely different context.

No less important element of visual art in the creation of the Mad Times series has become for me typography, whose source was mainly rooted in the Polish tradition of artistic posters and graffiti. Concluding the reflection on the issues of the works and their sources, I described the issue of interpersonal contacts and observations of the closest environment in the creative process.

No less important to me than the substantive layer of an artistic work is its aesthetic value, i.e. technical quality, selection of artistic means and graphic design, which I mention in

chapter three. I describe how, during my PhD studies, I developed a method and language of creative expression by combining intaglio printing techniques (etching, etching on the grain, aquatint, dry point, sugar chipping) with woodcut and linocut and using semi-transparent printing inks.

The sequence of actions over each work of the cycle was constant. The first stage of the work was to prepare a sketch in a graphic processing program (scans of drawings, overlaying colours and textures). In the vast majority of graphics, the first printed layer is a print from a black metal matrix, which is the composition skeleton of a given project. On the top of it, layers of colour of the matrix developed in plywood or/and linoleum were applied with partially transparent ink.

The next fragment of the work is a kind of discernment in the visual arts and social sciences in terms of the topics undertaken. I describe here the concept of the culture of fear, overt fear, hidden fear and other psychological processes and their reflection in art over the centuries - from the Middle Ages to contemporary times (from the motif of danse macabre, through Baroque vanitative paintings, to the modern art of expressionists). The relationship between art and the Church has been known in history for centuries. The use of symbols or arrangements of figures taken from sacred art in works of nonreligious character, as in the described cycle, also. Such works have been created by Marc Chagall, Max Ernst, Sam Jinks, Dorota Nieznalska, (...), and artists of the so called third current of Polish art of the 80s.

In my projects I often use self-portrait, which for me is a universal symbol of more general features than those that are socially acceptable to me. Coming closer to the concept of a symbolic self-portrait, I mentioned the work of Jacek Malczewski and Agata Bogacka.

The last chapter of the work is a summary of the work, in which I express my opinion on the originality of my author's proposals, their universality and the exhaustion of the subject under consideration.