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To See the Invisible

Borys Makary at the Foto-Gen Gallery

„FORMAT” 2020 / format.net.pl

The evidence of the maturity of art entails the duty of searching, the principle of inquiry, the postulate of creative activeness, which discovers and exhibits. The tools of inquiry, the technologies of today, facilitate the discovery of an ever-greater perfection of existence. Science is leading here, but art is just behind, and artists feel that their mission helps to uncover Truth. They visualise their explorations in an aesthetic form. The recipient of these actions may be directed – not without effort – to think according to the artist's intention, invited to interact, treated as a student awaiting illumination. Borys Makary's exhibition at the Foto-Gen Gallery in Wrocław focuses on the process of thinking subjected to the visual path of cognition. What is the idea behind it?

Let us have a look at the title: "2460376" – it is a simplified notation of the volume of a coal cube of the side of 1.35 cm. What we are not going to ask about: formal measures, the absolute, metre, the cosmos, and the laws of physics. Borys Makary is well prepared and competently lectures on ideological and artistic principles, and not without a didactic passion in his texts accompanying the exhibition, as well as in radio conversations. "In the project, on the basis of mathematical calculations, I have created a coal cube the volume of which contains the entire humanity. The cube is made of coal/carbon, because life exists on the basis of this element, it is its symbol". The artist demonstrates an openness of thinking, assessment and sensitivity, which aims at "the transformation of the human attitude not only towards art, but to him/herself and other people, towards the world". It is conceptual radicalism: let us ask to what extent it is legible and attractive after the time that has passed since conceptual

determination. "I clash naturalistic objects with photographs taken through an electron microscope". "The body is a part of the Universe, it is built from the same matter, it is matter, and, in its fragility, it will pass, just like the cosmos". Conceptual inclinations to combine art and science manifest or even dominate here, but the power of poetic statement is, *ipso facto*, a message, when we read that, in relation to the Universe, the human being is "a piece of carbon in the depths of the unknown". Superb photographic images of the varied black and white expression of both painterly and geometric arrangements are permeated by mystery stemming from facing the creation coming from the Great Geometrician's workshop, which Makary ostentatiously penetrates by means of an electron camera. Makary's original texts explaining and describing the exhibition may constitute an alternative: they impose a language to interpret the exhibition, which mainly consists of photographs, but also of artefacts and video clips. Especially, with regard to the autonomy of photographic image, it is a stimulation of imagination, and, what follows, we owe the aesthetic experience not to ourselves, as it appears. For Ingarden's "human experiential act", a contact with the unknown, gives the feeling of being an explorer, and it is our separate business. Meanwhile, something is lost when Borys Makary explains the effects obtained by means of the technique of electron photography, which reveals the matter of the elements of carbon, calcium or bismuth. The creative methods and the programme assumptions reveal what the company Makary mingles with. In 1968, Sol Le Witt buried a metal cube. He made the object invisible to let imagination run wild on many levels, to connect a sequence of guesses, sensations, associations related to the situation of burying in the ground, grounding, invisibility, concealment with the act of hiding. Makary recognises it as an essential message of art, discovering the invisible, and implements this postulate by means of electron photographs. Nevertheless, the thesis regarding exploration of the unknown is dubious here. We can see, plainly, enlarged structures of matter, its composition, the incredible aesthetic of the forms of the gigantically enlarged fragments of nature. What we see is what we see. Electron photography is a modern extension of the human eye. Metaphorically, Makary follows Leonardo da Vinci's eye revealing – more than five hundred years ago – the invisible: the interior of the human body (muscles, a foetus in the mother's

body, internal organs etc.), as an artist-empiricist, drawing anatomical studies of the photographic accuracy.

The long-lasting process of the drawing closer of art and science is on-going. Scientists, physicists, mathematicians look for solutions, do mathematical proofs, solve puzzles. Behind all that, there is often a tiresome, complicated, sometimes inconclusive process of thinking. From the area of scientific investigation of epistemological nature emerges the exhibition "2460376" at the Foto-Gen Gallery. Additionally, a couple of statements from physicians. The Nobel Prize winner Richard Feynman: "The discovery of the structures of the order of the Universe is based on aesthetic premises". Murray Gell-Mann takes the view that nature is inseparable from beauty. Stoics' pantheism comes to my mind: "The world is a single whole, as if it were a gigantic organic body. It is alive, sentient, purposeful, and, at the same time, unitary, governed by one law, like a living and thinking creature". Does Borys Makary perceive his creative endeavours presented at the exhibition as a cognitive platform? It seems interesting what the continuation and the type of intellectual perspective may follow. An exhibition should not go down in history, but form it. The world in which we perceive a supernatural character is perfect, unlimited, eternal and infinite; its nature is divine, and its laws and forms are explored by Borys Makary.