



mag. Arven Šakti Kralj Szomi
"Dekle jesenske nebine / The Girl of Aster"

Galerija ZDSLU, Ljubljana

Arven Šakti Kralj Szomi

Dekle jesenske nebine - razstava umetniških fotografij

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Dekle jesenske nebine

Damir Globočnik

Fotografske razstave Arven Šakti Kralj Szomi so zasnovane kot v sebi zaključene izjave, pri čemer imajo posamezni motivi lahko podobno vlogo kot besede v stavkih. Način njihovega branja Arven Šakti sugerira s postavitvijo fotografij, z njihovo velikostjo, sosledjem in povezovanjem v različne sestave. Tovrstno razumevanje fotografskega jezika, s katerimi avtorica oblikuje fotografske projekte, so pisci praviloma povezovali z drugim področjem njenega delovanja – prevajanjem, zlasti besedil o umetnosti.

Seveda nas lahko vsaka posamezna fotografija potegne vase, zlasti ker sta estetski vidik in formalna dognanost vselej povezana z nekoliko skrivnostno sporočilnostjo. Če se torej vendarle poglobimo v vsak posnetek posebej, ugotovimo, da Arven Šakti ni zanimala slikovitost motivike same po sebi. Avtorica selektivno beleži svet okoli sebe. Pritegnila so jo vzdusja izbranih prostorov – v enaki meri pa je seveda prisoten tudi prenos lastnih občutij v naravno ali urbano okolje. V ospredju so torej psihične, duhovne predstave, ki jih lahko spodbudi zlasti črno-bela fotografija. O tej stični točki, ki posredno povezuje fotografije Arven Šakti, pričajo nekateri nekonvencionalni poudarki pri fotografskem beleženju vidne realnosti, na primer način kadriranja, koti snemanja in temnine, ki prežemajo dele motivov. Avtorica lahko pri svojem delu uporabi različne fotografske tehnike in oblike predstavitve fotografij (analogna fotografija, mobilni telefon z vgrajeno kamero, digitalni print, knjiga umetnika, video). Barvna digitalna fotografija ima po njenih besedah vlogo fotografske skice. Fotografije včasih spominjajo na zamrznjene filmske kadre, način njihovega nizanja pa na montažo. Upoštevatí je potrebno tudi podatek, da je Arven Šakti magistrirala iz fotografije (prof. Milan Pajk) in iz videa (prof. Srečo Dragan), njeno magistrsko delo pa se ukvarja z integracija elementov fotografskega jezika v druge medije.

Kot rečeno, na razstavah posamezni fotografski motivi Arven Šakti praviloma korespondirajo z drugimi motivi. Pomemben je način, kako so fotografije zložene skupaj. Medsebojna interakcija motivov na fotografijah namreč odločilno vpliva na način njihovega branja. Razbiranje »podteksta« posameznih fotografij in njihovih skupkov nam odkrije vsebinsko sporočilo razstave. Ker pomen motivike ni enoznačen, so ob osrednji pripovedni liniji seveda možne tudi vzporedne pripovedi. Gledalci lahko sami odločamo, kaj bomo izbrali, s čim se bomo poistovetili.

V tako zasnovanem fotografskem svetu Arven Šakti, ki ga sestavljajo zajeti trenutki, se odvija pripoved oziroma zgodba, ki jo posredujejo nizi fotografij. Dojemati jih moramo kot celoto, saj se le na ta način, s pomočjo simultanega prehajanja od enega do drugega motiva, sprožijo tiste vizualne, miselne in čustvene asociacije, ki jih lahko povežemo v »rdečo nit«, t. j. v tisto pripoved, o kateri je hotela spregovoriti avtorica. Vseбина, ki ima pogosto simbolen in metaforičen podton, je povezana z najsugestivnejšo motivno prvino na fotografijah – likom deklice, ki je, kot je poudarila Arven Šakti, »razcepljena med svetovi in pričakovanji sodobne družbe in lastnim sanjskim svetom«. Človeško telo poleg svoje predstavnosti na fotografiji služi kot metafora in v določenih primerih – tudi razstava Arven Šakti je med njimi – omogoča intimno potovanje ustvarjalca vase. O tem poleg predstavitve figure v nenavadnih, sanjskih in pravljičnih situacijah in obujanja spominov na lastno otroštvo priča tudi sklicevanje na literarno predlogo Lewisa Carolla Alice v čudežni deželi, na katero je večkrat opozorila likovna kritika (razstave Čudežna dežela, Likovni kritiki izbirajo, Cankarjev dom v Ljubljani, 2016; Dialogi, Galerija KiBela, KIBLA, Maribor, 2016; V deželi ogledal, Fotogalerija Stolp v Mariboru, oktober 2017; Berem te, Galerija Krško, september 2018).

The Girl of Aster

Damir Globočnik

The photography exhibitions of Arven Šakti Kralj Szomi are conceived as statements within themselves, where individual motifs play a similar role to words in sentences. Arven Šakti prompts their reading by the positioning of the photographs, their scale, sequence and ways in which they interconnect into various combinations. Such an understanding of the language of photography, as used by the artist to shape her photographic projects, has mostly been linked by writers with another area of her work – translation, particularly of art-based texts.

Of course, we can be taken by every individual photograph, especially since the aesthetic aspect and formal assertion are always tied to a somewhat mysterious message. But if we nevertheless delve deeper into each individual shot, we find that Arven Šakti was not interested in the picturesque aspect of the motif per se. The artist selectively notates the world that surrounds her. She has been drawn to the atmosphere of certain spaces – while the conveyance of her own feelings into the natural or urban setting is of course also present to the same extent. Mental, spiritual images are therefore at the forefront, which can be particularly stimulated by black and white photography. This point of contact, which forges indirect connections between Arven Šakti’s photographs, is evidenced by some unconventional emphases in the photographic recording of visual reality, such as framing for instance, shooting angles and spaces of darkness that pervade parts of the subject. The artist may use various photographic techniques and forms of presenting the photographs in her practice (analogue photography, mobile phone with built-in camera, digital printing, artists’ books, video). Digital colour photography plays the role of photographic sketching, according to the artist. Her photographic images are sometimes reminiscent of frozen film stills, whereas their sequencing reminds of the editing process. It should also be noted that Arven Šakti holds a master’s degree in Photography (Prof. Milan Pajk) and Video (Prof. Srečo Dragan), and her master’s thesis is concerned with the integration of photographic language elements into other mediums.

As already said, the separate photographic motifs in the exhibitions of Arven Šakti generally draw on a correspondence with other motifs. The way in which the photographs are placed together holds great importance. The interaction of the motifs in the photographs has a decisive impact on the way that they are read. Deciphering the “subtext” of the individual photographs and how they correspond together reveals the meaning and message of the exhibition. Since the meaning of the motif does not lack ambiguity, parallel narratives along the central narrative line are also possible. As viewers, we can decide for ourselves what to choose, what to identify with.

In the world of photography by Arven Šakti, which has been conceived in the described manner and composed of captured moments, a narrative or story unfolds, conveyed by the sequences of photographs. We need to perceive them as a whole, since this is the only way in which visual, mental and emotional associations can be triggered through the simultaneous transition from one motif to another, which can be linked to the “leitmotif”, i.e. the narrative, which the artist wanted to articulate. The subject, which often has a symbolic and metaphorical undertone, is tied to the most suggestive of motif elements in the photographs – the girl figure, as Arven Šakti points out, “split between the worlds and expectations of present-day society and her own dream world”. Besides its own representation, the human body serves as a metaphor in the photographs and in certain cases – including the exhibition by Arven Šakti – enables the creator to embark on an intimate journey into him- or herself. Besides presenting the figure in unusual, dreamy and fairy-tale settings, and evoking

memories of one’s childhood, references are also made by the artist to Lewis Carroll’s Alice in Wonderland, as has also been noted by other art reviews (exhibitions Wonderland, Art Critics Select, Cankarjev dom in Ljubljana, 2016; Dialogues, KiBela Gallery, KIBLA, Maribor, 2016; In the Land of Mirrors, Stolp Photo Gallery in Maribor, October 2017; I read you, Krško Gallery, September 2018).

Arven Šakti Kralj Szomi (1974) je vizualna umetnica, ki deluje v polju fotografije in sorodnih umetnostnih praks. Diplomski študij Fine Art, Studio Practice and Contemporary Critical Theory je končala z odliko na Goldsmiths’ College – University of London. Magistrski študij iz videa in fotografije je opravila na ljubljanski ALUO. Z njeno prepoznavno likovno govorico se srečujemo že od leta 2002, ko se je prvič predstavila slovenski javnosti s fotografsko razstavo v Bežigrajski galeriji. Od leta 2004 je samozaposlena v kulturi na podlagi kriterijev izjemnosti Ministrstva za kulturo RS. Od istega leta je članica strokovnega društva DLUL in ZDSLU. Redno razstavlja doma in tujini. Poleg izbranih skupinskih razstav in pregledov sodobnih slovenskih ustvarjalcev, kot so ArtNetLab – Video, et gaudeo (Galerija ZDSLU), Vidno nevidno, afekt in razpoložnje skozi sodobno slovensko fotografijo (Galerija sodobne umetnosti Celje), Fotonični trenutki, mesec evropske fotografije (Galerija Photon), Pogled na slovensko likovno umetnost doma in po svetu (Galerija Božidar Jakac), Brezčasna Ofelija (Cankarjev dom), med njenimi nedavnimi samostojnimi projekti velja omeniti fotografsko postavitev v prostoru Ne tu ne tam na lendavskem gradu, ki je bila umeščena v spremljevalni program razstave Marca Chagalla Galerije-Muzeja Lendava, fotografsko instalacijo Berem te v cerkvenem ambientu Galerije Krško ter razstavo velikoformatnih črno-belih fotografij V deželi ogledal v mariborskem Fotostolpu.

Tematsko se v svojem fotografskem delu zadnjega obdobja osredotoča na lik deklice in dekleta, ki ga raziskuje v sklopu projekta Dekle jesenske nebine za katerega je bila nagrajena z delovno štipendijo Ministrstva za kulturo RS. Leta 2019 je za svoj opus del tudi prejela najvišje priznanje ALUO UL.

Arven Šakti Kralj Szomi (1974) is a visual artist working in the field of photography and related art practices. She received her degree in Fine Art, Studio Practice and Contemporary Critical Theory with honours from Goldsmiths’ College – University of London and completed her master’s degree in Video and Photography at the Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Ljubljana. Her recognisable visual language has been noted since 2002, when she first presented herself to the Slovenian public in a solo photography exhibition at the Bežigrad Gallery. She has worked as a self-employed artist accredited by the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Slovenia since 2004. In the same year, she was elected as a member of the Ljubljana Fine Artists Society (DLUL) and the Association of the Slovenian Fine Artists Societies (ZDSLU). She regularly exhibits at home and abroad. In addition to selected group exhibitions and overviews of contemporary Slovenian art such as ArtNetLab – Video, et gaudeo (ZDSLU Gallery), Visible Invisible, Affect and Mood through Photography in Contemporary Slovenian Photography (Celje Gallery of Contemporary Art), Photonic Moments, European Photography Month (Photon Gallery), A Look at Slovenian Art at Home and Around the World (Božidar Jakac Gallery), Timeless Ophelia (Cankarjev dom), the following solo presentations are also worthy of mention: the photo installation Neither here nor there at Lendava Castle, which was part of the accompanying programme of the large-scale Marc Chagall exhibition at the Gallery-Museum Lendava, the installation of photographs I read you in the setting of the former church that is today Krško Gallery, and the exhibition of large-format black and white photographs In the Land of Mirrors at the Stolp Photo Gallery in Maribor.

In terms of theme, her photo works of the recent period focus on the girl figure, which is explored by the artist as part of The Girl of Aster project, for which she was awarded a working scholarship by the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Slovenia. In 2019, she also received the highest-ranking award for her body of work from the Academy of Fine Arts and Design and the University of Ljubljana.

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