



Galerie Školská 28

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# Monochrom

Jan 24 – Feb 29, 2012

Opening hours – Tue-Fri 1pm-5pm (Tue till 7pm).

**Sandra Aubry a Sebastien Bourg, Didier Courbot, Amande In, Erik Larsson, Lindsay Lawson, Eden Morfaux, Timur Si-Qin, Mauro Vignando**

Curated by Michal Novotný

Despite the opinion of many, the essence of a monochrome doesn't lie in its monochromness, i.e. in one color scheme, but rather in the fact that monochrome doesn't represent anything. Or, if you prefer, doesn't directly represent «anything». However by not directly representing «anything», the monochrome automatically refers to «something». «Nothing», that is to say, leads to thinking of «something» by its nature. Our feeling, that somewhere is «nothing» grows directly from our belief, that there should be «something». Therefore the exhibition Monochrome offers definition of monochrome as a representation of missing.

Following this conception monochrome doesn't have to be exclusively monochromatic, or even doesn't have to especially be of any color. Any monochrome always rather exists in the sphere of unseen and for its core aspect of missing is of the biggest importance only the negation of previously established form. An ideal example of, in such a way negated form, is therefore its total removal. Monochrome par excellence therefore can be Rauschenberg's Erased de Konning as much as 4 minutes 33 seconds long silence of John Cage.

However we could therefore speak of a certain tradition the aim of this show is not to create, state or underline any movement, style or tendency in a traditional art historical way. As we suggested previously, the essence of monochrome is lying only in what is being unseen and untold. It is only the human mind who unconsciously fulfil this empty negated form and make it be linked to something. This tendency is then also closely related to our urge to categorize, to give order to the things.

Borges once describes «a certain Chinese Encyclopedia», the Celestial Emporium of Benevolent Knowledge, in which it is written that animals are divided into: «those that belong to the Emperor, embalmed ones, those that are trained, suckling pigs, mermaids, fabulous ones, stray dogs, those included in the present classification (...).» However nonsense this categorization might seem, it actually points well the weak point of categorizations in general. Said with Wittgenstein – «the cow chews its food and then dungs the rose with it, so the rose has teeth in the mouth of a beast.»

Would there actually be a better example of false categorization then exhibition based on what is unseen in the works included? An old joke describes a conversation between mild-mannered woman intellectual and rough countryside macho. «How can you believe in something you have never seen?» she pose a question upon the existence of God. «I have never seen your pussy too, but I still do believe you have it.» he replies.

Isn't actually this all the essence of art? The belief of what we don't see, but what we somehow feel? This exhibition doesn't claim for any validity. Its validity, as much as the validity of the works included, lies only in its poeticity.

## Works on display

**AMANDE IN** presents three small works creating together a certain kind of dialogue. Her work Treasure consist of a normal key and key chain. However for the first look this key might seem ordinary, with a bit more attention we notice, there is something missing. This key is a virgin key, it has not been cut to a specific lock and therefore can in potential open any door, but in practice any. What is missing here is actually the missing. The Girl in the Flammable Skirt seems also to be just a white sheet of paper. A true monochrome. However its essence lies more in the lemon juice mentioned in the caption. Lemon juice dried invisible takes brown color only with the exposure to heat. Only a owner of this work can therefore make reveal its secret, but in the same time will risk, that he will burn it and lost it forever. Work Dream stands on a non visual

description of a visual work, however as the caption mentions never realised. The reduction here is not being proceed only to the form of language, but also cut to the shortest description possible. Its is therefore not only the artist who dreams, but also the visitor. Notebook is a serie created since 2004. In her free time AMANDE is lining originally white sheets of different notebooks. Therefore she keeps her hands busy as much as keeps a certain kind of productivity however very relative facing the fact we all consider notebook being empty with or without lines.

The work of Berlin based artist **Timur Si-Qin** is made of a simple still wall projection. However the projected image is in its original electronic form solid black (rgb 100,100,100), projected on the wall we see it light grey or almost white. Black is, that is to say, as any other color only a reaction of a material to the falling light. As black we therefore see the surface, which is in the dark and so there is no light being reflected by it, or it consists from such a kind of material, which the light absorbs. As the projected image is only made of light, it cannot ever be fully black. The projector can only project black as blind dots in contrast to the lightened ones. The fully black image therefore becomes white. However in reality it is also not white. We again see it as white because of the darkness of the other surround. The solid black rectangle of Timur Si-Qin is therefore nor black nor white. Rather is a certain prerequisite of our perception, between black and white stuck light.

Paris based artist **Eden Morfaux** presents a series of nine almost kitschy landscape photos. However they're showing us rocky mountains or by years of tide rounded sea coast, each of the pictures looks like someone would have cut a part out of it. We feel like the white background under the photo shines out of this empty square shaped hole. If we look closer we notice though, that the white square is in fact a part of the scenery itself. That is to say, it was Eden Morfaux himself who place in the photogaphed landscape a white painted canvas facing the camera and only our unconsciousness connects the white colour with the colour of the background. Nonetheless it is not the white square which is the real background of the scenery, but the landscape which makes a background to the white square. Morfaux as much as Si-Qin is pointing here the reversibility of our visual sensitivity and even more the relationship between an object and its context. Simultaneously he requestions the perception of the act of an artist. The creative act here consist of the creation of emptiness. But also a space.

The work of **Mauro Vignando** from Milan in Italy, despite being called *Buddha*, seemingly recalls rather the tradition of American minimalism. All what we see is a small pure plank of ebony. But its name does have more then just an aurastic meaning, as this plank was once a real sculpture of Buddha bought in a small shop in Milan. But only before Vignando sectioned it in six parts so as to extract a small wooden plank from its interior. The memory of its original form here loses all visible appearance. Only to a certain level though. The Buddha who we imagine sitting in his typical position of mental balance, was actually previously also just a wooden plank. The act of destruction here becomes the act of coming to the beginning, into a forever circle of born and reborn. This strong gesture of trying to get to the essence of things by un-

covering, taking away the «cover», here also carries a metaphor of the position of a sculptor and artist in general.

French artist **Didier Courbot** is placing poetical descriptions such as «Mediterranean harbor with colourful ships and sunset» under empty photo album sheets with cut out pictures whose presence recalls only the corner leveling lines. In this simple gesture he thematise the essence of the photo album itself. It is not about what we actually see but about which memories it recalls in our minds. It is only the visitor who fills those empty sheets with his own associations. Artist becomes just a medium, but in the same time the medium, he has always been.

The video of **Erik Larsson** seems to be at first sight broken. As if the gallery staff would forget to switch on the player so one the screen there appears only white noise. However Erik has decided to actually present as his work this white noise. But its not exactly an ordinary one. Its its true artistic presentation as Erik hand drawn this white noise. Many hours of work spend on creation of this animation seems however in its result very relative as we dont see on the screen anything else then a white noise. Larsson therefore creates here a certain simulacrum and speaks therefore about the work of an artist in general. But he doesnt do that in any dialectics nor dogma, but with humour and irony.

The work of **Sandra Aubry** and **Sebastien Bourg** is a simple most common cheap kitchen clock. It has been modified in a way that it has no more hands and a dial which doesnt remind us of their ever presence. However this clock is hanging on its usual place and stubbornly asks for our attention. Maybe unfortunately, the time still goes on, and we even hear the clock ticking. Whatever our efforts to control, understand and describe are.

Two ships passing from American born, Berlin based artist **Lindsay Lawson**, is a paper postcard. However instead of the front page, where we usually find photos of exciting places, has this postcard two front sides with printed lines for addresses and fields for stamp and short message. This means, that we don't know where it actually comes from. Nonetheless it can be also send to two conflicting addresses. Then only the chance decides, whom it will finally be delivered.

*Michal Novotný*