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Review
of the doctoral dissertation and artistic achievements
of Mr Patryk Rogiński

drawn up in connection with a doctoral degree conferment procedure in the field of art, in the discipline of fine art and art conservation, E. Geppert Academy of Art and Design in Wrocław

General information about the doctoral student

Mr Patryk Rogiński, born in 1993 in Wrocław, graduate of the Stanisław Kopystyński Secondary School of Fine Arts in Wrocław, specialisation: visual advertising (2006-2012). He graduated from the E. Geppert Academy of Art and Design in Wrocław, Faculty of Ceramics and Glass. He pursued his BA studies under the supervision of Professor Grażyna Płocica and Professor Gabriel Palowski in 2012-15, and his MA studies also under the supervision of Professor Grażyna Płocica and Professor Gabriel Palowski in 2015-17. He was awarded both his Bachelor's and Master's degrees with distinction.

As part of the Erasmus+ international exchange programme, he studied successively at the University of Wolverhampton, UK (2013/14) and at the Oslo National Academy of the Arts in Oslo, Norway (2015/16). In the years 2019-2021, he completed the interdepartmental doctoral study programme in English, at the E. Geppert Academy of Art and Design in Wrocław, specialising in ceramics. Developing his professional competences, he also completed a Norwegian language course.

Other professional experience of Mr Rogiński: since 2018 he has been employed as a manager of the Glass Studio, Glasso Group, Wrocław. This experience was preceded by an internship in photography and painting (2015-17), including his work as a photographer for the Contrast magazine in Wrocław, where he was responsible for creating photo-illustrations (2012-15). In 2014 he completed his internship as a ceramist in the workshop of dying crafts in the Folk Culture Museum in Węgorzewo.

Artistic achievements

The path of Mr Rogiński's artistic pursuits is filled with numerous interesting events, in which he skilfully combines creativity, education and the promotion of his works. Following his ambitious development plan, he improved his technique and conceptual skills, and took advantage of participating in an international educational programme, which contributed both to the development of his artistic personality and to the consolidation of his linguistic competences. Undoubtedly, as a result of this experience, he also became familiar with academic centres and broadened his individual perspective of cultural references.

His artistic achievements include a number of exhibitions, including the group exhibitions:

2017 I Am Human

2017 Respira

- 2018 Underwater Wrocław, MIXTURES VOL.2, Browar Mieszczkański, Wrocław, Poland
- 2019 Ceramics XXL, Festival of High Temperatures, E. Geppert Academy of Art and Design in Wrocław, Workshops and Presentations
- 2019 Zeniths MWW, Wrocław, Poland
- 2020 Satellite Imagery, Typa Gallery, Tartu, Estonia
- 2021 Zine Without a Crown - publication in Magazine, 8th Edition 2020
- 2021 Give Me Emotions, a mural event, Bytom, Poland
- 2021 Lacuna Festivals Group Exhibition, Lanzarote, Spain

The motto of Mr Patryk Rogiński's artistic work, as he claims, is the body and its deformations seen through the prism of aesthetics. Already his 2017 diploma work with distinction heralded an interesting direction of action focusing on these issues. A series of ten sculptures – ceramic heads – boldly combined the knowledge of the technique with the translation of the idea into a sculptural object, and was an indication of the doctoral student's characteristic interest in undertaking non-obvious, experimental tasks, requiring both a precise concept and a certain courage to aggravate themes that, due to the tendencies, may turn out to be difficult in reception. One of his early independent creative works is "Defrag" (2018), an installation consisting of dozens of glass objects with printed portraits, placed in a deep brewery pool, which suggestively expresses emotions and a kind of disintegration at the level of a deeply hidden ego. The engineering of the work, its multimedia character, confirmed the author's ability to competently use diverse forms and techniques. The spatiality of physical objects cooperates here with optical effects, distortions of glass rasters, which results in a broadly interpretative artistic phenomenon. Mr Patryk Rogiński also continues the traditional figurative sculptural form, for instance in the work "Venus" of 2019 (Ceramics XXL) and the abstract work "The Awakening" (2019). One can see an interest in a wide range of thinking about sculptural form: from the exuberance of biological forms to the minimalist austerity of geometric elements, confirming that both figurative and design orientations are permanently present in the area of interest and the form of the doctoral student's artistic work.

Photographic, printmaking and drawing activities constitute an important part of his work, and although they have a common core of activities on a plane, they are treated by the author as an element belonging to a common group of the language of expression concerning space. From this perspective, one can see that the candidate is consistent in his search for a place open to a creative, inter-genre character. In his explorations, he uses the classical representation of the body, the portrait, which is subject to expressive and semantic modifications. Similarly as in spatial forms, in which he introduces formal reorganisation, here too he applies both transformations and physical interventions in the image, through spatial layering, tearing, manual destruction or the use of chemicals. One can also distinguish here a graphic performance in the city space, a mural entitled "Harmony of Sadness" (2021, GIVE ME EMOTIONS, BYTOM), where he expresses individual emotions shaped by the specificity of the city space in a graphic sign.

I assess the creative achievements positively, and I perceive them as a harmonious development of the candidate's interests, supported by his experience and constant activity, which strengthen his conviction as to the direction of his explorations and support the process of development of his individual language.

Evaluation of the doctoral dissertation

Mr Patryk Rogiński presented his doctoral dissertation entitled "Anti-aestheticism of the human figure in contemporary sculpture".

The author thoroughly analyses the sources of anti-aestheticism, pointing to the ambiguous

interpretation of the concept, trying at the same time to transcend the common tendency to narrow or even simplify the term. He points out that the freedom of body modification is the effect of not only bold biotechnological operations, which have a limited range in social awareness, but also a number of factors which on a mass scale and extremely deeply format human imagination, paradoxically releasing inexhaustible layers of creative and marketing inventiveness. He presents numerous stylistic and ideological varieties of anti-aestheticism over the decades, highlighting the influence and importance of such contemporary factors as digital tools, virtual games and multimedia, film, new materials and others that intensely influence post-figurative creativity. Undoubtedly connected with this process is the image of excess, saturation, and the crossing of boundaries, hitherto treated as an obvious norm, and currently functioning as an endless chain of varieties, not easily classifiable.

It should be noted that distinguishing the specificity of his creative work, the author differentiates between inspiration by a socio-political situation and individual experience, which is characterised by a particular, individualised perception of the observed phenomenon. He rightly observes that the body is a vessel for emotions, a stimulus for creativity, which artists have eagerly welcomed in the era of cognitive overload. This is replaced by the concept of the biological perception of man. As he writes (...): “What is sick and dying reminds us of the fleeting nature of life; this leads to a further conclusion about bodily deformations, which evoke in the viewer a multitude of emotional overtones”. He is close here to Richard Shusterman’s concept and his notion of “somaesthetics”, in which the philosopher considers the body as an instrument of sensual and aesthetic cognition, perfectly diagnosing all the changes it undergoes.

Thus, we can see that by referring to important themes in the perception of the body: its structure, identity, substance, the doctoral student refers to the profound changes characteristic of the so-called post-biological era. Moreover, he writes that focusing on this issue in a broader perspective helped him to understand his area of interest and give it a different perspective, thus the theoretical work, although it deals with a broad phenomenon of disintegration, overload, refers directly to his personal experience as a person subjected to factors that violate his integrity and harmony. The author, as a researcher-artist, understands the situation of threats resulting from the intensification of stimulants, the appearance of external, but also internal pressure, and therefore he expresses existential anxiety, fears, phobias caused by the distant transformations and, in the sculptural work, gives expression to their presence in himself and his derivative artistic work.

In conclusion, Mr Rogiński thoroughly and extensively discusses both the sources of anti-aestheticism, its causes, examples and development prospects, building a background for his own artistic work. The text is accompanied by an extensive bibliography, including literature in English, is a reliable analysis of the phenomenon and shows the doctoral student as an inquisitive analyst of the issues in question.

The artistic work as part of the doctoral dissertation

The artistic part of the dissertation consists of thematically related groups of ceramic sculptures made of chamotte masses covered with glazing paints and a series of digitally and analogue modified photographs. The integral character of these works as a whole is based on the concept of developing a relationship between two-dimensional objects and a spatial composition, thus showing a certain soft boundary between genres, which stems from the need to emphasise the free flow between the used means of expression.

The doctoral work consists of the following groups of spatial objects:

PARASITES - chamotte mass /firing 1100 C/ covered with glazing paints

- NEST 98x76x51 cm
- PARASITE 60x45x 44 cm
- IMAGO 32 x29x 19 cm

IMPOSSIBILITIES - chamotte mass / firing 950-1100 C / covered with glazing paints

- TEARING 74x30x24 cm
- WILL POWER 91x58 x24 cm
- DYSTHYMIA 52x22x19 cm

FALLS - chamotte mass / firing 1100 C/ covered with glazing paints

- ATTEMPT 70 x 50 x 30 cm
- LARVA 53 x 39 x 29 cm

The compositions have also been extended by arrangements containing relations between objects from different groups.

Additionally, the spatial works have been complemented by a series of photographs entitled DISINTEGRATION.

In his artistic work, Mr Patryk Rogiński uses the figurative motif in the form of radical distortions, as he explains, he presents it in the category of “brutal realism”. The extreme visual language, the overloading of stimuli, the violation of the nobility of the applied techniques express, in a symbolic way, the dynamics of transformations generated by the overburdening characteristic of modernity. With a broad gesture, the author covers both the issues of the standardised image of the body – after all, we are dealing with the legibility of the human figure – and all kinds of deviations resulting from the laws of nature, cultural influences and the unveiling of dark states of mind. In this way, the body, while retaining its iconic legibility, becomes a screen reflecting both the physical and metaphorical forces deforming the natural tissue. What draws attention, however, is the dramaturgy of these forms, compositional arrangements and the naturalistic colour contained in all groups of sculptures: Parasites, Impossibilities, Falls. These sculptures are presented in an almost hyper-realistic form of deformation as multiplied growths, tumours, which intensifies the expression of the work, and results in a sense of excess. One might even say that these means provoke a reflection about crossing the border, which would provide a certain comfort of thinking that here we have a transitional situation, that despite all the changes we are subjected to: whether at our own request, as consumers of various services, or subjected to invisible but strong persuasions, internal difficulties, we are not stuck in a dead end. I think we find it difficult to agree to such a strong saturation of the effects of managing our consciousness, emotions, reality. This is all the more moving if we really trust our senses, which, as Rudolf Amheim argued, provide the perceptual equivalent for all theoretical concepts, for all such concepts arise primarily from sensory experience.

While discussing the work it should also be noted that the author, presenting three separate groups of ceramic works, complemented them with compilations of juxtapositions, dynamising the systems in terms of composition and meaning. Thus the author introduces a certain implication of the instrumental use of the body as a portable, dehumanised element, deprived of the right to self-decide. The body, however, does not remain in isolation and is constantly confronted in relations with other, in this case equally specific manifestations of body expression.

An interesting part of the dissertation, of a slightly different character, is also a series of photographs entitled “Disintegration”. Photography as an extension of earlier practices does not constitute a background for sculptural forms, but it completes the artist’s statement on the level of visual and semantic expansion. We can even say that the author freely transfers two- and three-dimensional parameters between his works, which allows him freedom of expression without the rigour of subordination to one convention or technology. However, he does it in a balanced way, preserving the legibility of the message with great artistic sensitivity. The very attempt to express the symbolic act of interference in the body by chemically inducing plastic changes in the image makes the work open, without the need to categorise. In the context of spatial forms, these works contain a slightly different message, and although the author also abandons here the formula of aesthetics as natural beauty, he allows it to exist in the phase of transformation. The use of deformations on a realistically presented image of the body reveals the process of losing control, showing the phenomenon of the self-destructive transformation of an aesthetically pleasing body

into a creative disassembly. I find this palimpsest superimposition of opposites in one image to be an interesting commentary on reality.

The question remains open: in Mr Roginski's concept, are we dealing with a conviction of such an intensification of change that the natural body begins to flee from the horizon of reality? Does the almost palpable progression of the game with the body, felt by almost everyone, bring us the perspective of identifying the future, or is it only a question of what transformations it undergoes in the present?

Conclusion

The works of Mr Patryk Rogiński undoubtedly have cognitive value. In both the spatial and graphic records, the author captures transgressive situations in variation, emphasising the significance of the phenomenon and its presence in diverse shapes, resulting from separate origins. The author's awareness of the transformations of post-traditional culture and his knowledge of artistic techniques allow him to move freely within the grammar of a contemporary work of art, in which he places his own work, in a very unique manner. The universal "soma" presented in the artistic work is at the same time his brave, intimate self-image of experiences and emotions, which makes it a broader reflection on a human being in borderline situations. And although it includes an analysis of external causes, it is above all an expression of the truth about personal struggles, which have evolved from traumatic experiences into an understanding of broad phenomena characteristic of contemporary times.

Taking into consideration a number of artistic achievements, popularisation activity and the high level of the doctoral dissertation, I am of the opinion that the dissertation and the creative output confirm the artistic qualifications of Mr Patryk Rogiński in the field of artistic and academic practice. Thus, I think that the dissertation meets the requirements set out in Article 13(1) of the Act of 14 March 2003 on academic degrees and academic title and on degrees and title in art. Consequently, I recommend awarding Mr Patryk Rogiński the degree of doctor in the field of art, in the discipline of fine arts and conservation of art.

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