
SUMMARY

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Anatomy of a Fragment. Fragment as a creative process

The doctoral work *Anatomy of a Fragment. Fragment as Creative Process* consists of a series of works *Everything Solid Melts into Air*, which is made up of three series of prints and print-objects: *Infinite Fragments*, *Fragmented Self*, and *Proof of Absence*. The first two sets of works were created using serigraphy, in the last set I used photopolymer matrices for printing. I used kozo and gampi plant fibre in all of them, which I prepared myself.

The titles of the individual cycles and the entire dissertation clearly indicate that the fragment is the central theme of my artistic and research explorations. I analyse it in order to define the creative field it generates. In my work I explore the roles, possibilities and significance of the fragment in art, and in particular in printmaking.

Aware of the vastness of aspects and issues related to this concept, I have made a subjective selection of facts, philosophical approaches and artistic references. My aim was to narrow it down to a few key aspects that are reflected in my printmaking works.

I treat the fragment as a tool for perceiving and describing the contemporary world, and human beings in particular. A fragment, can have a virtually infinite number of definitions, and its incompleteness makes it open to a variety of interpretations and meanings. It always contains opposites, being both a desire to know the unknown and a way of understanding the absent.

I have divided the work into four parts - chapters entitled: *Brutal delicacy*, *Collectors of fragments*, *On the need for the fragment in printmaking*, *Infinite fragments*.

In the first chapter, I discuss issues related to the delicacy and power contained in the fragment. Beginning with an etymological search, from the Latin *fragmentum* through the ancient Greek root *rhégnūmi*, *spáō*, *klasma* and *thraúō*, I show that the fragment is always a trace of violence, despite its apparent fragility. I analyse and discuss this dichotomy more extensively in the following subsections as *sehnsucht*, or painful longing, exemplified in the story of the torso of Ramses II and the reconstruction of the sculpture Laokoon's Group, but also as a force during the French Revolution and in Piranesi's prints. I have shown that fragments are carriers of extremely diverse messages: they can be delicate and melancholic, but they can also express the power of change and even be its provocateur.

In the second chapter, I change the area of consideration. I analyse how the creative use of the fragment enables artistic expression in the visual arts. I refer to the works of three artists: Kurt Schwitters (b. 1887), Jan Berdyszak (b. 1934) and Cornelia Parker (b. 1956). These artists, representing different generations and using different media, based their search precisely on the fragment and its meanings. For them, the ruined remnant becomes the element that most fully reflects the impossibility of any whole. By drawing attention to it, they elevate it to a pedestal, giving it an exalted and sublime character, allowing it, as an independent particle, to provoke the viewer to co-create meaning.

In the third chapter, I consider the parallels between the dual nature of both the fragment and the art print. I show that the coexistence of process, exploration, delicacy and brutality, multiplicity and unity, finitude and infinity is at the core of both described. This observation has influenced my approach to printmaking, which I see as creating presence through absence.

The fourth chapter is a commentary on the print series *Infinite Fragments*, *Fragmented Self* and *Proof of Absence* presented for evaluation in my doctoral dissertation. In them, I express through printmaking, photography and installation the key features of the fragment, which for me is a symbol of the experience of modernity and the sense of living in a world that is constantly evolving. It was important to select one element from the printmaking process - paper. By working with it, I recognise the materiality of the fragments that co-create my prints. The text also includes a presentation of the research process carried out as part of the doctoral project: the methods of working with Asian plant fibres, the characteristics of the attempts made and their results, and an explanation of the significance of the use of this material in the completed and presented works.

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