

PIER STOCKHOLM: PRISMATIC.

Planted on his work table in his studio -as seen in the photograph on the invitation to PRISMATIC, which will open in Casa Triangulo-, Pier Stockholm has a lamp with a really strange shape. Although it's small, it reminds one of a UFO out of a 1950s sci-fi film, but it also bears a resemblance to the super-stylized figures those early digital game designers gave to space invaders from other fictional, digital galaxies. For me it's the *punctum* of the picture (I'm sure it's the same for others), and quite a weird object, too, with its slender, modern lines and metallic surface making it a striking sculptural object. The lamp even looks likely to propel itself into the air, all on its own, from the table surface. It works as an affectionate poke at modernist design and modern imagination, an icon encompassing Life and Death in Utopia, if one can be envisaged.

PRISMATIC is an art exhibit that resorts to contemporary aesthetic practices in an attempt to chart the largely unspecified nature of one individual's connections with the *Zeitgeist* (the spirit of the times), in full-colour spectrum, and in homage to the explorations of form and function in design, as part of a life-affirming avant-garde utopianism exemplified by Bauhaus. There's no nostalgia in it, only cheer, as we watch Stockholm light-heartedly approach the Living End: as he subtly probes the psyche -his psyche- to render in space, as if in an allegorical magnetic field, a state of balance between the Eros-driven will to life and the death-wish.

From the entrance, where upon walking in one encounters a small floor-installation of colour pencils that appear to have been evoked out of a colour photographic print, and right onto the video in homage of Godardian un-emotion, on the first-floor mezzanine, Stockholm plants hints along the way very light-handedly.

It comes as no surprise that he should have generated an artistic exhibit that manages to claim both Oskar Schlemmer, with his choreographies for dancers-become-sculptures-in-motion, gyrating and jumping in space, and Charly Garcia, the time-and-drug ravaged Argentinian rock legend, as the godfathers of a summing up of art and life he subscribes to. Schlemmer's Triadic Ballet was an early example of modern dance and sculpture merging experimentally and he thought the stage workshop he directed in Bauhaus was "the meeting point of the metaphysical". He also taught life-drawing classes there, however, and these led him on to do classes on 'man', with a universalistic slant in 1926-27: "[...] he maintained that man, as a natural being hurrying through space and time, is determined by biological, mechanical, and kinetic laws. A part of the cosmological relation between the material and the spiritual, he is able to create art and to reflect on aesthetic and ethical questions" (*Bauhaus Archive Berlin – Museum of Design: The collection*, Ed. Berlin, 1999, p.66).

One is reminded of Schlemmer trying to rationalize his teaching at all stages by applying the scientific principles that dominated the school's outlook, by an artwork by Stockholm which addresses Charly Garcia's discography up to the present and creates a mock-scientific order and hierarchy structure to present it. He deploys a didactic Table of sorts to isolate it from time. Colour is absent from it and yet the memory of García's words and music would appear to suffice to colour it.

Stockholm's interest in colour, structure and volumetric line drawing is vividly present in this exhibit. His proposal in contemporary drawing is a fully-fledged achievement honed from what was there at the outset of his artistic process around 2000. His training as architect in Lima, Peru, had certainly to do with it. But then he also started to find ways to circumvent the strict conceptual, mathematical constructs of line and

plane, so as to gradually build a range of allusion to project something different to a state of technical coolness and a climate of impersonality. Since he had, quite frankly, always tended to live in his head, what became uppermost in his thinking was letting the mind –*his* mind-, shift in its contemporary matrix of chemically-prevented pitfalls. This became the horizon against which he then pitted, together, both utopianism, as pure vision in which form and function are precisely conjoined with feeling, and freedom of association, with a certain degree of randomness even, to derive a work-method for himself.

It also meant the gradual incorporation in his work process of memories and recollections of an emotional, sometimes very personal kind, sometimes allowed to work their way into his actual artwork through appropriation of images and colour schemes. By 2002 his process became marked by unexpected intimations of time and space, and produced what I am tempted to call ‘melancholy landscapes’, which were sometimes also ‘cityscapes’ by extension. These suggested impersonal, elegiac topographies in the form of architectural drawings, and at their most extreme implied the fanciful, and yet uplifting sewing-and-piecing together of a Prozac- garden headpiece made out of different fabrics. With it, the ‘melancholy landscape’ was evidenced as a portable accessory, especially through photographs that quite unexpectedly portrayed the artist’s lifestyle as that of a loner who might be a *flaneur*, prone to wearing his mind on his head.

A full decade on, his keenness to deal with the visual triad of colour, structure and volumetric line-drawing remains unabated. His penchant for exploration has driven him on to probe space and time culturally, in search of new ways of posing the question concerning how to engage thought and emotion in the making of art. PRISMATIC embodies his latest mode of addressing the Living End through a quirky vision of what might be the accents required to transpose the human life-cycle, if one had to figure it out visually in terms of the triad.

The complementation of opposites also makes an appearance in the end. Black deals briskly but categorically with the mask one might favor wearing through one’s ups and downs, and white comes into its own, with pantone attached, displaying a variety of tones that awakens one’s sense of wonder.

And then Pier Stockholm decrees full-stop.

In the end is the beginning. The full colour photograph of the loner in the studio wearing the primary colour mask brings everything to halt. With a jolt.

Jorge Villacorta. Lima, November 2012.