



MAK MELCHER
ATELIJER 08

Galerija Forum, П. 3. - 10. 4. 2020.



Feda Gavrilović

Koliko su naši životi vezani uz prostore? U Scorseseovoj ekranizaciji *Doba nevinosti* (romana Edith Wharton iz 1920.) ta je poveznica prikazana efektom vožnjom kamere kroz interijer koji se ubrzano mijenja, kao što se i protagonistov život ubrzava od trenutka kada doznaje da će postati otac. Prostori se mijenjaju, stare i propadaju s nama.

Galerije su mjesta na kojima se instalacije kipara Maka Melchera rađaju i na kojima umiru. Budući da Melcher stvara velike i impozantne površine od gline, taj se materijal prepušten vremenu troši, puca i mjestimično osipa. Na nekim njegovim ostvarenjima, poput onoga izloženog na Salonu mladih 2014., poveći komadi gline otpadali su s goleme konstrukcije, a na drugim se njegovim radovima tek ponegdje truse komadići te sasušene zemlje (a ponekada, kao u ovom slučaju, ispucala materija se prilično čvrsto drži za jutenu podlogu).

A zemlja je metaforički snažno povezana s ljudskim tijelom. Od drevnih mitova u kojima je ona gradivni element od kojega su bogovi utjelovili čovjeka, pa do njezine ključne uloge u brojnim svakodnevnim životima posvećenima agrikulturi koja je prehranjivala čovječanstvo. Melcherova zemljana instalacija slična je ljudskom životu – vezana je uz jedan specifični prostor, troši se i nepovratno nestaje. Ekspresivna, gruba tekstura osušene i ispucale gline u kontrastu je s formom koja sugerira draperiju, to jest laganu tkaninu koketno prebačenu preko ograde. Odjeća uvijek implicira i vlasnika, a ova glinena halja izgleda kao ljudska koža (slikarica Biserka Baretić jedan je veliki poliptih iz 2008. koji

asocira na razapetu ljudsku kožu nazvala *Habit ljudski*), a odbačena je koža simbol ponovnog rođenja (u sjećanje mi sad dolazi i drag mi stih Leonarda Cohena: „Born again is born without a skin“). Asocijacije su, kao što vidimo, raznovrsne i duboko egzistencijalnog potencijala koji proizlazi iz specifične materije i forme.

Ali, kada skinemo, ogulimo ili strusimo sve metaforičke razine, ostaje možda ona najosnovnija u kojoj je sakrivena golema fascinacija koju imaju Melcherove skulpture. To je jedinstvo onog materijalnog s onim – u nedostatku jednoznačnije riječi – eteričnim, što može značiti i spekulativnim, misaonim ili duhovnim, uglavnom onim što nije svedivo na vidljiv oblik ili konkretnu mjeru. U ovoj monumentalnoj instalaciji prisutan je i nevidljivi vlasnik odložene draperije (možda neki titanski sveti Bartolomej oderane kože koji je sišao s Michelangelova *Posljednjeg suda*) i materija kojom je bio ogrnut, kojom je komunicirao s okolinom i koja ga je od te okoline štitila.

MAK MELCHER rođen je 1983. godine u Mostaru. Na Akademiji likovnih umjetnosti u Zagrebu diplomirao je kiparstvo 2008. Radio je kao asistent kiparice Marije Ujević i Dalibora Stošića, a trenutačno radi kao nastavnik u Školi primijenjene umjetnosti i dizajna u Zagrebu. Kako i naslov ove izložbe govori, to mu je osma samostalna izložba.







Atelier 08, 2020., juta, glina / jute, clay, 500 x 300 x 90 cm

Feda Gavrilović

How much are our lives connected with spaces? In Scorsese's adaptation of *The Age of Innocence* (of Edith Wharton's 1920 novel) that connection is depicted through the effective panning of the camera through the fast-changing interior, the same way the protagonist's life accelerates from the moment he finds out he will become a father. Spaces age, change, and deteriorate with us.

Galleries are spaces where installations by sculptor Mak Melcher are born and where they die. Since Melcher produces large and imposing clay surfaces, the material is left to waste, crack and sporadically fall apart with time. In some of his works, like the one exhibited at the 2014 Youth Salon, large pieces of clay fell off a huge construction, and on his other works, only small bits of the dried soil crumbled.

And soil is metaphorically connected with the human body. From the ancient myths in which it is the building element from which the gods embodied man, to its key role in numerous everyday lives dedicated to agriculture which fed humanity. Melcher's soil installation is similar to human life – it is connected with a specific space, it wastes and irreversibly disappears. The expressive, rough texture of dried and cracked clay is in contrast with the form which suggests a drapery, i.e. a light fabric flirtatiously thrown over a railing. Clothes always imply an owner, and this clay dress has the appearance of human skin (painter Biserka Baretić titled one large polyptych from 2008 reminiscent of stretched human skin *Human habit*), while castaway skin is a

symbol of rebirth (a lyric by Leonard Cohen comes to mind: “Born again is born without a skin”). Associations are, evidently, various and have a deeply existential potential which stems from the specific material and form.

But, when all the metaphorical layers are removed, peeled or crumbled, maybe the most basic one remains, in which the huge fascination of Melcher’s sculptures is hidden. It is the unity of the material with the – in lack of a more unequivocal word – ethereal, which can also mean speculative, contemplative or spiritual, mostly that which cannot be reduced to a visible form or concrete measure. Also present in this monumental installation is the invisible owner of the discarded drapery (maybe some titanic skinned St Bartholomew who descended from Michelangelo’s *Last Judgement*) and material they were covered with, with which they communicated with their surroundings and which protected them from those surroundings.

MAK MELCHER was born in 1983 in Mostar. He graduated at the Academy of Fine Arts in Zagreb in 2008 with a degree in sculpture. He worked as an assistant to Marija Ujević and Dalibor Stošić, and is currently teaching at the School of Applied Arts and Design in Zagreb. As the title of the exhibition points out, this is his eighth solo exhibition.



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IZDAVAČ / PUBLISHER: Kulturno informativni centar, Preradovićeva 5, Zagreb **ZA IZDAVAČA / FOR THE PUBLISHER:** Petar Bujas, ravnatelj / director **VODITELJ GALERIJE, KUSTOS IZLOŽBE / AUTHOR PREDGOVORA / GALLERY MANAGER, EXHIBITION CURATOR AND AUTHOR OF THE FOREWORD:** Feđa Gavrilović **STRUČNA SURADNICA / EXPERT ASSOCIATE:** Hana Marta Jurčević-Bulić **TEHNIČKI POSTAV / TECHNICAL SET-UP:** Vedran Grladinović, Marin Kovačević **DIZAJN KATALOGA I PLAKATA / DESIGN OF CATALOGUE AND POSTER:** Ivana Vulić **LEKTURA / PROOFREADING:** Mateja Fabijanić **PRIJEVOD / TRANSLATION:** Nina Pisk **FOTOGRAFIJE / PHOTOGRAPHY:** Ivan Posavec **NAKLADA / PRINT RUN:** 300

ISBN: 978-953-7356-48-4

Izložba je ostvarena uz potporu Gradskog ureda za kulturu Grada Zagreba. / The realization of the exhibition is supported by the City of Zagreb's Office for Culture.

