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Attila Szűcs
Transhuman Etudes
Curator: Gerda Széplaky

Attila Szucs, one of the most important painters of Hungarian contemporary art, began his career at the same time as the change of the communist regime in Hungary happened. After an initial experimentation with different genres and mediums he quickly found the language that allows him to express himself the most authentic way as well as he found those subjects that represent his painting and philosophical sensitivity. Thus came in the center of his interest the phenomenon of blind spot accompanying vision; the relation between the bare space and the fragmentary shapes (objects, body parts); the link between darkness, light and gloom as they complete each other; or even the topography of deficiency-organized places. Since the nineties his attention is more and more focused on the human being. We can discover qualities and attitudes related to humanity in his compositions (for example states of anxiety, shock, loneliness) – even if the human being is not present in the world that surrounds him. From existentialist tones of alienation arose a genuine private mythology by the beginning of the two thousand years, in which until 2010 the motif of “planking” human figure has become decisive. We can see on numerous paintings those women, children and men, who are turned to the ground, but they float above the ground. The absurdity of this special posture is enhanced by a space cleaned of ordinary objects, reflecting metaphysical homelessness.
On the newest works of the artist we can discover a crossing of different narratives. The narrative technique that can be perceived as a “palimpsest game”, through which different horizons and perspectives are wedged into each other, is based on Szucs`s specific creative strategy: on the one hand he uses the compositional tools of realism; on the other hand he follows the metaphysical painting tradition. As a result of this duality that creates a fertile tension as well in narrative as in creation, the paintings never record just the events on the visible horizon of reality but also the one that is beyond the plane of experience. We can see simultaneously what is happening right now in the present reality, and what takes place in an unknowns place, unknown time – in a possibly nonexistent world. Thus, the not-visible gets in the focus of the sight that represents the human world. That is why we may have the feeling looking at Attila Szucs`s paintings that they are constantly initiating us into a secret.
Although ordinary human stories come alive on the paintings – more precisely not stories but emphasized moments by means of freezing, in the depth of these moments the world of hereafter opens up. Because there is not just a simple range of events hidden in the painting, interpreted as an essential print, but a kind of excess, that unfolds something substantial about the human. Not just about the world of humans, not just about the ordinary presence in existence, but also about something beyond-human reflecting through the human perspective. Though the subject in the artist`s visual narratives is the individual human grabbed in his singularity (often the starting point of a painting is a photo taken of a real event) the background for the frozen narratives compressed into visual etudes is given by a non-worldly horizon.
The dichotomy of present reality and transcendence is rendered by all the here exhibited pictures (chosen from works created in the last two years). On the paintings created with brilliant technical knowledge we can see on the one hand the human being grabbed in his ordinariness and uniqueness, on the other hand we can see where the human being is coming from and where is he heading to: what is the original horizon that is hidden from the ordinary vision but is still keeping him. Moreover we can observe how the border between different qualities of beings is blurred, how the human being becomes one with his environment, with the world of plants for example. Showing off the beyond-human means not only the initiation in transcendence as invisible but also the reveal of transhuman qualities.

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