

ON THE ROAD TO THE ARCHETYPAL ROOTS OF ART

A cursory viewing of the paintings in Barbara Buttinger-Förster`s catalogue, leaves no doubt of the artist`s interest in primitive forms of art - as in those of indigenous peoples or of little children.

Remaining only on this level, you will find quite interesting things in the catalogue.

My perception of her art, however, contradicts this traditional view by accessing her art in multiple dimensions. Through this deeper level of perception, one can see the true depth of Barbara`s research into the archetypal roots of art and can make these roots comprehensible to the beholder.

I see the world around us not with a solid structure, but as a hologram. The forms we can see and palpate actually are made up of information anchored in the hydrosphere of Gaia, the Earth. Water vibrates everywhere around and inside us and is generally known to be an excellent memory for information. If the phenomenons of space and time are not stuck in fixed forms, but vibrating freely within the universe of water, then it is also imaginable that they consist of various layers or dimensions. In this context, pioneering physics speak about multidimensional space, and accordingly, of different time-horizons. So, if an artist like Barbara is interested in the origins of life and is working seriously on decoding them, then there is the possibility to penetrate into deeper dimensions of existence, searching for the roots of the single phenomenon in the manifested world. She is not bound by incarnated world-structures and, of course, even less to a "realistic" depiction.

To exemplify this, it is practical to choose one painting of the catalogue and examine it from the explained point of view of possible multidimensionality. Let us focus our perception on the painting called "Fish Mask" (page....). It shows a crowned woman in red with a fish swimming through the area of her eyes. It cannot escape our notice that the lower part of her body is cut off straight.

I at first perceive the painting by relating to the fish. The fish is terribly angry and says to me: "My realm is not the dried up head of the mind! My home is the watery hole of the belly!" In this sense, the fish is recognizable as the primordial power of Gaia which gives birth to life - surely rooted in a woman`s bearing organs. Did the artist make a mistake by putting the fish into the head of the woman? Not at all!

The next thing that attracts my attention is the two red dots in the center of the breasts.

According to the principle of yin and yang, they correspond to the two green dots located in the eyes of the woman. The fish, focused in the belly, introduces this pair of red and green dots as a kind of ladder, which he can use to get into the crowned head-area of the woman. Apparently this is not possible without application of the power of the heart. After reaching the heart level of the human being, the primordial fish can easily swing up into the woman's eye-area.

The story of Barbara's painting ends with the primeval fish lying stuck through my eyes and me looking around through his shimmering body. The world looks completely changed now. The usual dullness of the rainy day has gone and I see a paradise-world of Gaia.

Translated into a logic language, the considered painting of Barbara seems to encourage us to enlarge our ability of perception in order to experience the world surrounding us as a wonderful creation of Gaia - as it really is - without covering it with flat human machinations. This is possible only by being ready to look with our whole body, including the primeval power of the belly and especially from the level of the heart.

It is not my intention to put my interpretation of Barbara's painting into the foreground. I only want to prevent one from only seeing her seemingly naive kind of language, thus failing to perceive the deeper insights pulsating in the causal background of the paintings.

To clarify that the painting "Fish Mask" is not an exception in the sense mentioned above, we will look at another, "Rocks in the Moonlight" (page....). It can be described as a sickle of the moon, above three stones that fit into one another. Looking at the painting through the mirror of my body, my attention is led to my coccyx - at the extreme end of my spine. It becomes clear to me that the painting deals with powers and beings slumbering deep in the underworld of Gaia - the Earth-Creator. This can be recognized by the colors used, as well as by the sleeping eyes of the uppermost of the three "stones".

But look, the lowest of the three "stones", which is separated from the highest by the one in the middle, does not sleep, and instead looks up with a grin. The separation indicates that we are dealing with forces of the underworld. In fact, I see a terrible dragon behind it, emerging from the depths. To rescue myself from the dragon, I look for help in the half moon, which in the painting, is above the stones. The wave of its light is cold like steel and rolls through my heart-area, calming down the fiery power of the dragon. Now I understand why one of the stone trinity is lying transversely above the "dragon-stone", thus separating it from the sleeping "human stone".

Without its resonance with the moon-energy, the overheated dragonpower - representing atomic power - could not be cooled down to a degree bearable for the unaware, slumbering human consciousness. I see the painting in the context of the relationship between the primeval powers of the universe, the terrestrial underworld, and the human consciousness. This conflict is relevant under our present circumstances, as humanity is making intense use of the dragonpower, ignorant that this constitutes exploitation of the primeval forces of life, with potentially disastrous effects for the existence of our universe.

If we accept the possibility that my interpretations are, to a large extent, congruent with the content of the two paintings, then this begs the question, where this information, which I have tried to translate into logic relations as truthfully as possible, comes from and where it is stored. Does this mean that Barbara's paintings contain levels hidden from the spectator? To refute such an assumption, I have tried to include form and color which is directly traceable to the logical interpretation. My insight tells me that my described content was the inspiration received by the artist in her creative process. But the impulses of inspiration would evaporate after accomplishing their task of setting in motion the manifested artwork. So the question rises of why they are still existent for me, as an observer, several years after their creation.

In my opinion, this can be explained by the role of the hydrosphere, I mentioned earlier. Water was used for the fabrication of the paper and with the painting material. In addition, the most important watery component is the emotional cloud originating in the soul of the creating artist, undoubtedly enveloping the creative process. It is manifested by the artist's emotional reaction to the wave of ideas received through inspiration, which touch the mysteries of life. Together, all these watery components represent a sort of watery aura of the artwork, in which the accompanying information is stored. The observer of the painting comes into resonance with this watery-etheric field, and receives the entire multidimensional content of the given painting. The difference between one observer and the next is the degree to which the received content comes into consciousness, versus just assimilated internally. Both forms can be equally fruitful.

I notice that after the year 2012 a new dimension is added in the works of Barbara Buttinger-Förster. The themes of the paintings are often now dealing with the question of what art can accomplish for the preservation and evolution of the terrestrial universe. Through this, the artist touches the fundamental question of the role the human being has in this earthly universe and

how this role can be realized by artistic creation.

Let us take as an example, the painting "Angel of Peace", of the year 2013 (page....). In the middle, between animal and human, we can see an angel with widely spread wings. I ask myself, why I perceive it as if the wings swing continuously between the animal and the human figure like enormous sails.

The animal is curled up in a characteristic way, the paws touching the snout, in order to enclose the energy-circle of the body. A smoothly-flowing movement of energy is even visible in the belly-area of the painted animal.

On the other side of the "scale" we see a human figure, kneeling and bending over a cloud of consciousness. Different from the animal and its energy-stream, the field of consciousness cannot be enclosed entirely because it pulses, not only inside the human, but - marked by a rose spot - it emerges from the depth of the earth and pervades the human. In contrast to the animal, the human is not a naturally enclosed being, because he/she primarily is not dealing with circling life-energy, but with a cloud of consciousness, which can never be entirely comprised. Therefore, the human being is vulnerable in a subtle manner, indicated by its kneeling position on the painting. This vulnerability often leads us humans towards the boundaries of possibility. But the human being also shares in the divine grace, whose source is perceivable in the painting as a blue eye, the rays of which touch the back of the human figure. The back of a human is the embodiment of the archetypal levels of being human. It should not be interpreted as a consolation to the vulnerability of the human, but rather as the cosmic inspiration, completing the cloud of consciousness emerging from the earth. In the end, the human being is enclosed, and in its own form equal to the animal.

The fact that the animal and the human are two equal aspects of Gaia`s creation is confirmed by the swinging of the angel`s wings mentioned above. Although representing two different aspects of creation, they are tightly related. The animal too knows a level of consciousness - in the painting visible as an aura standing outside its body. And the human by his/her kneeling position, is also striving for the completion of his/her being.

The painting "Peace-Angel", not only addresses the relationships between the animal-kingdom, the human being, the angelic worlds, and the deep dimensions of the Divine; but it addresses their relationship in a unique way. We might see it as a contribution to the renewal of the human position within the universe of life.

Keeping in mind of what has already been said about the hologram of the world, we may

understand that the world cannot continue as something solid and secure, but in order to stay in harmony with the cosmic cycles, must be designed and transformed in every moment. To accomplish this tremendous feat, countless beings are active. We humans too have a role to play. We must be ready to perceive this role and to put it into practice. Perhaps art offers - by its different tools - the best possibility to take part in the permanent process of world-creation and transformation. But to realize this role, art should be liberated from its secondary task - as cultural consumption. I hope that I have adequately supported my feeling that Barbara Buttinger-Förster`s art represents a clear example for the realization of this precious role of art.

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