



MIHAI COȚOVANU

Date personale:

Date of birth: 21 iulie 1967

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Studies:

1987-1989, Școala Populară de Arte, clasa prof. Ghiță Leonard

1990-1995, Academia de Arte „G. Enescu”, Facultatea de Arte Plastice și Design, Iași, Specialitatea Pedagogia artei, clasa prof. Parghel Virgil. Membru al U.A.P Filiala Iași din 2007, Membru Societății Culturale Junimea.

He participated in 38 group exhibitions and competition, of which the most important:

Expoziția-concurs „Dominus” București 1991, Muzeul de artă „Târgoviște” 1994, Salonul de Toamnă – Muzeul de artă Palatul Culturii Iași 1997, 2002, Concursul internațional de artă Bârlad, Expoziția Sacru și profan, Bârlad 2007, Saloanele Moldovei 2008, Artis, World Trade Center, Iași 2006-2010.

He accomplished 51 personal exhibitions, the most important being:

Galeria de artă „Cupola” Iași 1998, 2004, 2005, 2007, 2010, Galeriile de artă „N. Tonitza” Iași 2009, Galeriile de artă „Artis” București 2005, Galeriile de artă „Orizont” București 2006, Galeriile de artă „Europe” Brașov 2004, 2005, Muzeul Etnografic Gura Humorului 2006, Muzeul de artă Constanța 2007, Galeriile de artă „Frunzetti” Bacău 2007, Galeriile de artă „Lascar Vorel” Piatra Neamț, Casa O.N.U. București 2007, Muzeul de artă Vaslui 2007, Muzeul de artă Brașov 2007, Galeriile de artă „Sofia” 2009, Galeria de artă a Municipiului Rădăuți 2003, 2005, Castelul Bruhl, Germania 2008, Sala „Constantin Brâncuși” Palatul Parlamentului București 2009.

Publications: 29 de articole in ziarul Flacăra Iașului: „Un tablou pentru eternitate”, „Autenticitate și ipocrizie”, „În clasa domnului profesor Ghiță Leonard”, „Avangarda și comunismul I,II”, „Spovedania unui artist”, „Umbre ale avangardei”, „Să moară realismul”, etc. 2006 albumul „Penelul și paleta” - Mihai Coțovanu semnat de Valentin Ciucă.

- Prezentat în albumul de artă „Un secol de artă ieșeană” de Valentin Ciucă și „Nudul în pictura românească” de Mircea Deac.

Awards:

-Premiul I -Cântarea României ,1988, Salonul de toamnă.

-Premiul Academica „C.D. Stahî”, Concursul Național de Artă „Nicolae Tonitza”, Bârlad, 2006

-Medalia Fundației de Artă „Sf. Luca” -Premiul Național de Performanță „Top Art” acordat de revista „Top Bussines”, Noiembrie 2008 - Premiul special pentru portret, Simpozionul Național „Dimitrie Cantemir” 2010 - Premiul special pentru pictură, -Premiul „Mihai Eminescu” pentru pictură la Concursul Internațional de Arte vizuale „Noi și Eminescu” 2011, Iași.

Artworks in personal collections: Dr. Constantin Teodorescu, Ilie Sârbu, Dr. Hortensiu Aldea, Carmen Saenciuc, Dorin Mihalache, Valentin Ciucă, Cășuneanu Paulina, Claudiu Paradais etc.

Franța, Israel, Japonia, S.U.A., Canada, Germania, Italia, Grecia, Austria, Elveția și Belgia.

Artworks Art Museums:

Muzeul de artă Vaslui, Muzeul de artă Brașov, Muzeul Etnografic Gura Humorului.

Creative Camps:

Dobrovăț Iași 2007, Balcic 2008/2010 Hârsa Ploiești 2009/2010, Plopeni Ploiești 2009/2010,

Mihai Coțovanu - between portrait and landscape

When you travel and visit the worlds' museums, when stepping inside the artists' studios becomes a habit and when you find yourself aesthetically drawn and with a specific interest for understanding the artistic phenomena regardless of how varied they are, an imaginary museum incessantly enriched is being shaped in your memory. Essentially, you create a selection, a chronological order, a scale of artistic values that you've encountered. When seeing the work of a painter, you get the habit of including it in the history's shelters between the styles and the artists, in order to define, briefly and simple, its value, originality and uniqueness. We take this imaginary exercise of defining the artistic individuality and personality as a use pattern for approaching the work of the painter Mihai Coțovanu.

What do we know about the artist? At 44 years old, he belongs to the younger generation, with its multiple characteristics and wide artistic perspective. His artistic talent has been modelled at the "George Enescu" Art Academy in Iași, a School of highly academical standards, that formed many generations of artists. The artist lives and works in the heart of the cultural centre of Iași, a city with a rich historical tradition of the arts and culture, which brought and backed up numerous art personalities. Consequently, Mihai Coțovanu is permanently under the pressure of this tradition which gave birth to a school of romantic realism and emotional poetical landscape. Artists like Ștefan Dimitrescu, Max Arnold, Octav Băncilă, Corneliu Baba, I.N. Popa, Dan Hatmanu, Costache Agafiței, Mihai Cărmăruț, Victor Mihăilescu Craiu were educated and asserted themselves as such in Iași.

Coțovanu's paintings lay between classicism and modernism, between the romantic stillness of the city's painters and a wider, more dynamic, vision over nature. The painter loves to travel, to experiment new places and new people, to quickly write down his impressions so that he can afterwards, in his studio, be able to express his very own vision concerning the authenticity of the recently consumed images. The traditional landscape of Iași amplified his passion for light, colour and a central poetical atmosphere without losing the specific features of the places he was representing. Coțovanu worships the material facts, apparently insignificant and yet essential in the economy of the picture, creating thus the expression of the poetical emotion of the landscape daring use of enchanting colours. The artist has a special and unusual sensitiveness for the endless diversity of nature, hills, forests, tight lanes from the suburbs of the towns which he then all renders in skilful montages of colours.

We feel like the artist wishes to create portraits of the places

represented in his pictures, emphasizing their specificity and individuality. The landscapes are large, wide, often panoramic. He paints eagerly, without having any rest or any recesses. He is obsessed with painting. He loves the plein-air. A secret mystery animates the nature in its thrill. A melange of vigour and pervasive gentleness is transmitted through the images of the streets from Hotin, the Black Sea shores, Mamaia, Târgul Cucu, Iași or the walls of Brașov. Cold harsh winters, hot summers, nature after a storm, each of them express synthesised emotions, the sensitivity of a romantic writer. His work lays between the early tradition of the painters of nature and the beginning of modern painting of landscapes from the 20th century, closer to impressionism.

In that imaginary museum that I mentioned earlier, the painter Mihai Coțovanu is positioned next to the neo impressionists or, more technical, the post impressionists. Together with the landscapes, still natures benefit from a similar aesthetic attitude, as the artist avoids thematic evaluation or superficial approach. Consequently, still natures, especially flowers in the pipkins, metallic objects with a medieval scent or the fruits of the seasons absorb and reveal the light and the harmony of the rainbow like colours. Coțovanu expresses a new and original passion within the contemporary School of Iași, the one for portrait. The artist has a restless preference and application for the art of portrait. His love for the human being converts itself into an artistic dialog, a space of the artist's freedom of creation when faced with a the model.

His portraits are not fictional, caricatures or exercises for describing a pattern. Each model has its own place and artistic interpretation strongly individualised/marked. The models are members of his family all painted with gentleness. He is a master in portraits of children, friends, intellectuals, art critics (V. Ciucă), editors (Dorin Mihalache), academicians, doctors, antiquaries, feminine figures. Painters of portraits weren't that many, just a small number of authentic values: from Banat (sec. XIX), G.D. Mirea (sec. XIX-XX), the unique master of design and portrait in composition, Camil Ressu, then Ștefan Dimitrescu, Corneliu Baba or Al.Ciucurencu. In this context, Coțovanu's portraits represent a great revelation in the present artistic environment. The portrait constitutes the repetition through imitation of the human face caught at a specific hour, day or year. As Coțovanu himself demonstrates, the portraits reveal the person hidden behind the visible "shell".

Coțovanu focuses on the coincidence between the real, genuine, individual figure and its representation, creating in the end a fictive portrayal of colours on a plane surface. Analysing the various types of people he portrays, although each of them is painted in an ephemeral moment, his portraits represent the layout of colourful harmonies expressively arranged, in a calm, sincere manner, all contributions of the artist's personality.

Coțovanu excels as a sensitive painter of portraits, a master of the accurate design, sturdy in his graphical drawing. As common feature, since most of the portraits are inspired by the acquaintances of the painter, they seem to be still, conveying a classic monumentality. The artist mostly creates half-length or three-quarters portraits, underlining in this way the dynamic spirit of the whole figure. The reverse to the static is given by the person's look, the expression in his eyes, a regard that spreads a well individualised character, a certain state of mind, an inner thrill.

Cotovanu's portrait betrays his predilection for the sumptuous, elegance, verisimilitude and symmetry. We also cannot overlook the universal moral feeling as a fundamental concept of human fate. This visionary and moral emotion invests Coțovanu's pictures, both portrait and landscape, with originality and appealingness, as an absolute proof of an authentic artistic talent.

Mircea Deac (Artă intru desăvârșire)