



Meta Mramor: Smrt podobe

Umetnica Meta Mramor, ki se v svoji razvijajoči se umetniški praksi najraje posveča mediju stekla, se na samostojni razstavi *Smrt podobe* predstavlja s štirimi izjemno osebnimi projekti, ki v svoji srčiki plastijo introspektivno soočanje s prevpraševanjem človeške samopodobe. V oziru do izbranega medija stekla se poleg kombinatornega umetničinega doživljanja lastnih občutenj le-ta razdaja na širokem spektru krhkosti, nestabilnosti, občutljivosti in ponavljajoče se neracionalnosti. Razmišljanja o ujetosti v lastno telo, njegovo nezanesljivo percepcijo in z dvomi, strahom ter čustvi povezano tesnoba naposled rezultirajo v delikatnem prepletu materialov in poglobljene lirične vsebine; na razstavi so predstavljeni projekti *Avtoportret* (2018), *Motnja telesne podobe* (2022, 2023), *Ok sm* (2023) in *Utopitev* (2024). Vsak izmed njih je nastal v specifičnem, z določenimi emotivnimi izzivi in delovnimi pogoji zaznamovanem okolju. Njihova skupna predstavitev na retrospektivno zastavljeni in kronološko zaokroženi razstavi nastopa kot intimna prvoosebna pripoved, po drugi strani pa predstavlja obrtniško dodelan fragment potenciala uporabe stekla. Spričo spretnostnih razsežnosti umetnice in tehnološke dovršenosti del *Smrt podobe* popelje (pre)pogosto zapostavljen medij stekla na višji, v okviru sodobne umetnosti celostno utelešen in primerno uravnovešen nivo.

Najstarejše delo na razstavi (in edino, ki je nastalo v Sloveniji) je naslovljeno *Avtoportret* (2018); kristalna kocka, narejena v tehniki izgubljenega voska, tematizira nenehno stremljenje k perfekciji. V svoji pojavnosti uteleša diskrepanco med človeško zunanostjo, ki je navidezno čvrsta, močna, uravnovešena in pravilna, ter notranjostjo, ki je fluidna, nepredvidljiva, kaotična in ranljiva; spolirane stranice kocke razkrivajo sredico, kjer lebdi organsko oblikovan negativen prostor. Simbolna raven je jasna in direktno povedna (posamezniki nastopamo skladni in urejeni, navznoter pa ostajamo nedostopni in ranljivi) ter ostaja v skladu z umetnično prakso iskanja pomenljivih vzporednic med fizikalnimi lastnostmi stekla in poglobljeno človeško naravo. Kljub temu naslavlja tudi avtoričino preizpraševanje umetniškega poklica in ukvarjanje z (tako za osebno umetniško prakso kot za administrativno birokratsko kvoto pomembno) dokumentacijo. Kuriozen aspekt *Avtoportreta* je namreč ta, da se je pred leti (spričo nesreče) razbil na več kosov. Na razstavi se tako predstavlja v svoji aktualni poškodovani obliki, s čimer neposredno ilustrira eno od nezanemarljivih lastnosti stekla: krhkost, minljivost, občutljivost, delikatnost in absolutnost. Odzvanja tudi dejstvo, da ne glede na izjemnost posameznih del, njihovo vsebinsko, estetsko ali konceptualno vrednost zanimanje in primerno umeščanje stekla v sodobno kulturno in vizualno sfero (zaradi manka produkcijskih prostorov in sredstev, tehnične pomoči, zavarovalnin ali znanja o mediju) ostajata nezadovoljiva.

Dvodelna skulptura *Motnje telesne podobe* predstavlja dva po kalupu (avtoričinega fizičnega telesa) upognjena steklena panela v črni barvi. Na Češkem nastalo delo je monumentalno, ponekod prosojno, drugod reflektivno, vsebuje imperfektne robove in mestoma izstopajoče tridimenzionalne organske, skorajda žanrske forme iz telesnih grozljivk. Obiskovalec se ob pogledu nanj sooča s popačeno samopodobo; temačni, impresivno izdelana kosa delujeta kot celopostavno ogledalo, ki deformira, v lastno percepcijo telesa pa vnaša dvom in subtilno nezadovoljstvo. Delo se, kot napoveduje že naslov, opira na problematiko lastne nezanesljivosti in motnje percepcije, kjer je le-ta iznakažena in v odnosu do lastnega telesa ostaja lažna, nikoli zadovoljiva. S tematiko čustvene tesnobe in soočanja z različnimi psihološkimi stanji se ukvarjata tudi projekta *Ok sm* in *Utopitev*. Slednji se v obliki avtoportretih skanografij nanaša na emocionalno izčrpanost in skorajšno izgorelost, serija *Ok sm* pa predstavlja na steklo gravirane risbe, nastale ob poslušanju glasbe. Oba projekta sta nastajala intuitivno in v objemu specifičnih čustvenih zanosov.

Celotna razstava povzema umetnično razburkano prehajanje med različnimi občutji in mehanizmi obvladovanja anksioznih situacij. Njena večletna praksa oblikovanja stekla odraža tako rezidenčno bivanje v različnih okoljih, delo v številnih delavnicah in obvladovanje tamkajšnjih kompleksnih odnosov kot tudi (in predvsem) iskreno spoštovanje in zanimanje za kompleksen in zahteven medij. Meta Mramor skozi natančnost, tehnično dovršenost, eksperimentalnost in prepričljivo vsebino umetniških del raziskuje, kako fizikalne značilnosti stekla transcendirajo njegovo sporočilnost znotraj umetniškega izraza in razdelanih konceptov, ki v tokratnem primeru terapevtskega opolnomočenja ostajajo v sferi nepredvidljivega, intimnega in krhkega.

Maša Žekš, umetnostna zgodovinarica in likovna kritičarka

Meta Mramor (1998) je oblikovalka in umetnica, ki ustvarja na presečišču stekla, unikatnega oblikovanja in kiparstva. Zaključila je dodiplomski in podiplomski študij unikatnega oblikovanja na Akademiji za likovno umetnost in oblikovanje Univerze v Ljubljani. V svojem delu raziskuje osebne, ranljive in telesne vidike materialnosti, prek katerih vzpostavlja povezavo med materialom, ustvarjalcem in občinstvom. Študijsko se je izpopolnjevala na Češkem, v Nemčiji in Estoniji, trenutno pa se v sklopu doktorskega študija izobražuje na Poljskem, kjer se osredotoča na družbeno vlogo stekla in preučuje njegove »nadmaterialne« dimenzije. Razstavlja na skupinskih razstavah tako doma kot v tujini. Mramor je prejemnica oblikovalske nagrade Symington Family Estates Glassberries Design Award 2022 (Porto, 2022) in nominacije za nagrado za podporo umetnosti na področju slikarstva in risbe STRABAG Artaward International 2024 (Dunaj, 2024).

Meta Mramor: Death of the Image

Meta Mramor, an artist whose preferred medium of expression in her evolving artistic practice is glass, conceived her solo exhibition *Death of the Image* as a presentation of four highly personal projects that, at their heart, layer introspective reconciliation with reflections on the human self-image. In relation to the chosen medium of glass, these unfold on a broad spectrum of fragility, instability, sensitivity and recurrent irrationality, alongside the artist's combinatorial experience of her feelings and perceptions. Meditations on entrapment in one's own body, its unreliable perception and the anxiety associated with doubts, fear and emotions ultimately result in a delicate interplay of materials and profoundly lyrical subject matter. The projects on view include *Self-Portrait* (2018), *Body Image Distortion* (2022, 2023), *I'm OK* (2023), and *Drowning* (2024). Each of them was created in a specific environment marked by certain emotional challenges and particular working conditions. Their collective presentation in a retrospectively conceived and chronologically organised exhibition appears as an intimate first-person narrative but also a technically perfected fragment of the potential the use of glass has to offer. Thanks to the artist's skill and the technological sophistication of the works, *Death of the Image* takes the (too) often neglected medium of glass to a higher, comprehensively embodied and adequately balanced level in the context of contemporary art.

The oldest work in the exhibition (and the only one made in Slovenia) is titled *Self-Portrait* (2018). A crystal cube made using the lost-wax casting technique, it discusses the constant striving for perfection. In its appearance, it embodies the discrepancy between the seemingly solid, strong, balanced, and regular human exterior, and the fluid, unpredictable, chaotic, and vulnerable interior, the polished sides of the cube revealing a core with a suspended organically shaped negative space. Its symbolic level is clear and straightforwardly telling (individuals appear coherent and orderly while remaining inwardly inaccessible and vulnerable) and remains in line with the artist's practice of finding meaningful parallels between the physical properties of glass and the deeper human nature. That said, it also addresses the artist's reflections on the artistic profession and its inevitable paperwork (which is vital both to her practice and the administrative bureaucratic quotas). Indeed, a curious aspect of *Self-Portrait* is that, a few years ago, it (accidentally) broke into several pieces. In the exhibition, it is presented in its current damaged form, thus directly illustrating one of the noteworthy properties of glass: fragility, transience, sensitivity, delicacy, or absoluteness. It is also a reflection of the fact that, outstanding as individual works might be, and however great their substantive, aesthetic or conceptual value, the interest in and acknowledgement of glass in the contemporary cultural and visual landscape remain unsatisfactory (due to insufficient production spaces and resources, technical assistance, insurance fees or knowledge of the medium).

The two-part sculpture *Body Image Distortion* features two black glass panels slumped over a mould (of the artist's physical body). Created in the Czech Republic, the work is monumental, translucent in places and reflective in others, containing imperfect edges and some protruding three-dimensional organic forms reminiscent of body horror genre films. When looking at it, one is confronted with a distorted self-image; the dark, impressively crafted pieces act as full-length mirrors distorting and imbuing one's perception of the body with doubt and subtle dissatisfaction. As the title suggests, the work explores the issue of one's insecurity and disturbed perception, where one's perception is disfigured and remains false in relation to one's own body, never satisfying. The projects *I'm OK*, and *Drowning* also explore emotional anxiety and coping with various psychological states. In the form of self-portrait scenography, the latter refers to emotional exhaustion and near burnout, while the *I'm OK* series features drawings engraved on glass, created while listening to music. Both projects were created intuitively in specific exuberantly emotional states.

Overall, the exhibition epitomises the artist's turbulent transitions between feelings and coping mechanisms in anxious situations. Mramor's long-standing practice of glass design reflects her residence in different environments, her work in numerous workshops, and her mastery of the complex relationships there, as well as (and above all) her sincere appreciation of and interest in this complex and challenging medium. Through the precision, technical perfection, experimentation and compelling substance of her artworks, Meta Mramor explores how the physical properties of glass transcend its meaningfulness within artistic expression and expounded concepts, which in this case of therapeutic empowerment remain in the realm of the unpredictable, intimate, and fragile.

Maša Žekš, art historian and art critic

Meta Mramor (1998) is a designer and artist at the intersection of glass, applied arts, and sculpture. She completed her undergraduate and postgraduate studies in applied arts at the Academy of Fine Arts and Design, University of Ljubljana. Her work explores the personal, vulnerable and bodily aspects of materiality, through which she establishes a connection between the material, the maker and the audience. Mramor has studied in the Czech Republic, Germany and Estonia, and is currently pursuing her PhD in Poland, focusing on the social role of glass and examining its "transmaterial" dimensions. She has exhibited in group exhibitions both in Slovenia and internationally. For her work, she received the Symington Family Estates Glassberries Design Award 2022 (Porto, 2022) and was nominated for the STRABAG Artaward International 2024 for the support of art in the fields of painting and drawing (Vienna, 2024).