

## LENKA VÍTKOVÁ / FIRST BOOK OF EMBLEMS

23. 2. - 7. 5. 2022

Fait Gallery, Ve Vaňkovce 2, Brno, Czech Republic

exhibition design, artistic collaboration: David Fesl

graphic design of the book and pendants: Daniela & Linda Dostálková, Sonni Scheuringer

text: Marek Pokorný

opening: 23. 2. 2022, 7 pm

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### I'll do something somehow

The most remarkable, for some perhaps somewhat old-fashioned but at the same time unusually topical aspect of Lenka Vítková's work is its emblematic nature. However, not in the art-history sense of the word when an image is directly linked with a text in a single sign unit which contains a gnomic title, allegorical representation and an epigram revealing the meaning of the enigmatic title and the even more enigmatic representation. In her case, the emblem is more appropriately understood as a metaphor for a variety of rather personal tactics and artistic strategies in uncovering meaning by obscuring it, and a multifaceted manifestation of the unity of poetry and image.

It is therefore not a literary extension of a work of art, or, conversely, of the imagery of texts but, first and foremost, a condensation of lived experience that allows the artist to perform meaning through a multi-directional exchange between the seen, the thought and the written, an exchange conducted through words, a spatial intervention, sound or moving image, a painterly gesture or the selection and processing of a specific material - in recent years, for example, plaster, which is not just the basis for painting etudes but also comes into play as a visually and haptically active thing-sign. The title of Lenka Vítková's current exhibition and the accompanying publication, *First Book of Emblems*, is therefore an explicit acknowledgement of the principle of her creative practice, as well as the artist's suggestion of how the viewer (and the reader) could approach them.

Waving, circling, approaching and receding, leaning, walking, falling. Transformation. A meaning created by the movement of words and the action of the painted surface, by an image related to a sentence. A meaning emerging from the image following a sentence, from a sound or film sequence as a transposition of a word or image. Lenka Vítková's approach to her work is typified by a special kind of civility and ability to speak for herself in relation to the emerging whole of the world through subjects whose prospective banality is cancelled not only by the mentioned emblematic nature but in recent years predominantly by working on the painting, painting as a still-effective way of showing what I mean. Clues which are obviously distilled starting points include not only signs, abstract patterns and abstracted realities or objects and configurations of the seen - glimpsed, but also objects, body fragments and figures. Yet it is always about the whole. Indeed, the subtle objectivity of the subject with which Lenka Vítková is currently working is accompanied at every step by her ability to share much broader contexts, more like a condition than an explanation of the present

ones, which make the choice even more significant. Or, last but not least, there is that unsentimental way in which the artist, through painterly means, lays out and activates the surface in order to keep in play the affective qualities of the creative process and their sources.

If Lenka Vítková's works and exhibitions sometimes make the sympathetic viewer feel slightly dizzy, it is due to the continuous stream of exchange between seeing and intellectual work. Her art (she is an exceptional colourist among painters of her generation and beyond) amplifies and intensifies the feeling of the viewer's physical presence in front of the painting or in its space, while at the same time giving meaning to the actual experience that the recipient is undergoing in a difficult-to-convey state of consciousness. One aspect of this type of artistic experience (emphasized by the tradition of modernism) is the result of long-standing exercises through which we still, albeit rarely, and then with a certain suspicion that we are definitely missing something, master the dialectical relationship in which the self and the universe, immediacy and mediation, subjectivity and impersonality, or tradition and its unique fulfilment, can be found. Although we can speculate about what the postmodern emancipation of the sign universe has made possible for the artist and which line of modernist subjective universalism she may be following, the artist herself has described her art practice most accurately: *"I'm coming,/ don't know what I'm bringing./ I'll start somewhere,/ I'll do something somehow./ Some things the material will do on its own. The gestures I own."*

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