

TANJA PAK
galerija**TR3**

Miklavž Komelj

Vidite, jaz mislim, da moramo kljub obstoju fizičnega in spiritualnega sveta oba črtati in verovati v tretjega, ki je harmonija obeh.

You see, I believe that despite the existence of the physical and spiritual world, we should eliminate both and believe in a third, which is a harmony of both.

Srečko Kosovel

STEKLO KOT OPNA NADOSEBNEGA DIHA

»Vsi pravijo, da je steklo hladno – zame je vroče, vedno v gibanju,« reče Tanja Pak v pogovoru o svojem delu.

Kajti zanjo je izkušnja stekla neločljiva od njegovega nastajanja – ko je steklo nekaj tekočega, nekaj, kar je dobesedno priteklo, teklo in steklo kot vrela tekočina, ki šele nato zamrzne. Če umetnica postavlja na svoji razstavi skupaj svoje steklene objekte in svoje fotografije, je obojemu skupna zavest o ujetju nekega konkretnega trenutka – ki ravno v tej svoji konkretnosti ne potrebuje drugih določil, ki bi ga opredeljevala. Zdi se, da umetnica ljubi nedoločenost – a to nikakor ni nepreciznost, ampak, ravno nasprotno, iskanje tistih najsubtilnejših percepcij, ki so na robu zaznave, iskanje neprepoznavnosti, iz katere se izvije prepoznanje brez opor s pomočjo kreativne imaginacije.

Kot da hoče v čisti obliki pokazati oblike v generativnem stanju, v njihovem vznikanju iz brezobličnosti.

Poznam slikarke in slikarje, ki na razstavah svojih del nočejo imeti pod steklom, ker se jim zdi, da steklo slike »ubije«. Steklo je vse prevečkrat dojemano kot nekaj brezdušnega, kot neka neproblematična in samoumevna prosojna snov brez skrivnosti, če je povezano z videnjem, pa je običajno razumljeno predvsem kot mehanski pripomoček korekcije vida ali vizualnega približevanja v napravah, ki so šle Goetheju na živce, ker je bil prepričan, da odvrčajo od resnične problematike videnja. Tanja Pak pa odkriva v steklu živost in skrivnostnost. V svojem oblikovalskem opusu dela s popolnoma prozornim steklom, v svojem kiparskem opusu pa najpogosteje z belo obarvanim steklom, ki zabrisuje prosojnost v smislu možnosti gledanja skozi, a jo na neki drugi ravni stopnjuje, ko še stopnjuje občutje krhkosti in kliče k nekemu drugačnemu gledanju, ki ni tako samoumevno. Kot pravi v eni od svojih pesmi o tej belini:

*ni,
da bi lahko bila.*

Pogled na krhke objekte iz takega stekla se povezuje z njeno fascinacijo s pokrajinami, ki jih kažejo njene fotografije – največkrat so puščave, pa tudi nordijske ali irske pokrajine z morjem, kjer meglice zastirajo horizont in kjer ptice letijo v tistem medprostoru, ki ga tako čudovito evocira pesem Jureta Detele:

*Kot se v spominu enotnega vesolja
samotna iskra, ki drsi v možganih,
razpre v upesnjen prostor: vodoraven,
kjer je lebdel nikoli ponovljen
galeb v amorfni zmesi mraka in zarje –
tako se le v ljubezni, Georg Trakl,
začarane poti sprostijo v sen.*

GLASS AS A MEMBRANE OF SUPRA-PERSONAL BREATH

“Everyone says that glass is cold – to me it is always hot, always in motion,” Tanja Pak said when discussing her work.

Because for her, the experience of glass is inseparable from its creation – when glass is liquid, something that literally flew and ran like boiling liquid only to freeze later. When the artist set her glass objects and photographs side by side at the exhibition, all share an awareness of capturing a specific moment in time, and due to this specificity, it needs no other characterisation to define it. The artist seems to thrive on a lack of definition, which is not the same as imprecision, but is, on the contrary, a quest for the most subtle perceptions on the border of perception, a quest for unrecognisability that leads to recognition with the aid of creative imagination.

As if she wanted to present forms in a generic state, in their emergence from formlessness.

I know painters who do not want their work to be exhibited under glass, as they think glass ‘kills’ the painting. Glass is too often perceived as soulless, as an unproblematic and self-evident material that hides no secrets; when connected with sight, it is usually perceived as a device for vision correction or magnifying objects, which irritated Goethe, who was convinced that they are a deflection from the real issue of sight. Yet Tanja Pak has discovered liveliness and mystery in glass. In her sculptures, she mostly uses white tinted glass to cloud the transparency of the object, while also magnifying transparency, as it were, by increasing the feeling of fragility and by urging a different, not self-evident, gaze. As she says in one of her poems about this whiteness:

*it is not,
so that it can be.*

The gaze of fragile objects made of such glass relates to her fascination with landscapes in her photographs – most often deserts, and also Nordic or Irish landscapes with the sea, where a haze clouds the horizon and birds fly in the space in-between, evoked so beautifully by the following poem by Jure Detela:

*Like in the memory of a single space
a lonely spark that drifts in the brain,
opening up into a world of poems: horizontal,
where it floated, never repeated
a seagull in the amorphous mixture of dusk and dawn –
and thus only in love, Georg Trakl,
enchanted paths are released into dreams.*

Tanja Pak v svojih zapiskih, ki ponekod prehajajo v poezijo, veliko govori o sanjah in sanjarjenju. Te meglice odprejo prostore, v katerih se je zelo lahko izgubiti v nedoločnosti ... Lahko pa odpirajo tudi prostore za delovanje, če skozi njih prepoznamo tisti medprostor, v katerem kreativna imaginacija magično spreminja realnost.

Za to pa je potrebna natančnost, precizno gibanje skozi prostor. Delo s steklom ne dopušča nobene nepreciznosti. Samo en nepreviden, neprecizen gib – in vse je lahko uničeno. »Ekstaza je natančna hoja,« pravi Tomaž Šalamun.

Tanja Pak, ki jo zelo inspirira tudi glasba – sama posebej omenja Arva Pärta – se zelo zaveda, kako morajo biti vsi njeni gibi usklajeni s tem, kar dela; da doseže preprosto popolnost, v kateri me njena dela – ki jih ustvarja v kolektivnem procesu, vedno znova zahtevajočem tudi precizno sodelovanje med ljudmi – spomnijo na japonske zenovske artefakte, mora kultivirati vse svoje zaznave in premike; ko je delala tudi fizično izredno zahteven projekt *Znotraj / I held my breath but the world kept on dreaming*, se je, da bi bil ta projekt resničen, vpisala celo na tečaj baleta za odrasle – prav zato, da bi dojela, kako se neki telesni napor spreminja v brežnost; naj navedem njene besede, s katerimi mi je opisala to izkušnjo:

»Ko sem se borila s tem resnično fizično zelo zahtevnim projektom (prostorska postavitev na 150 kvadratnih metrih z dvaintridesetimi 4,5 m visokimi drevesi, znotraj katerih so spale steklene veje, inspirirana z Bachelardom), ki je bil decembra 2011 na ogled na Ljubljanskem gradu, mi je »priplaval« v enem redkih trenutkov počitka črno-beli video clip Maye Plisetske, ki pleše Saint-Saënsovega *Umirajočega laboda* ... Popolnoma me je prevzela izjemna milina gibov, to je bilo nekaj tako ganljivo lepega ... Razmišljala sem o tej navidezni breztežnosti, neizmerni lahkosti ..., ki jo v baletu dosežejo skozi eno najtežjih figur, *pointe*, ki ga je prvič izvedla Ana Pavlova ... To sem povezala s svojim delom (trenutek je bil pravšnji, za projekt *Within* sem namešala 1,6 tone materiala, ki sem ga v obliki kalupov nekajkrat prenesla, preložila, in komaj čutila svoje telo), kjer je končni rezultat čist, bleščeč, in skorajda nima teže, za njim pa se skriva ves napor, prah, umazano delo, vneti prsti, zlomljeno telo ... Hotela sem v steklu preizkusiti, kje je meja, kako lahko material postane skorajda samo esenca, misel, kako lahko skorajda izgubi svojo prezenco v materialnem smislu in postane misel, občutek ... Do katere meje lahko grem, preden se pod lastno težo zlomi, in pri tem še vedno ohranim največjo možno krhkost, nežnost, eteričnost. Hotela sem razumeti, kako obvladati telo (lastno ali stekleno), koliko napora je potrebno, da daš videz breztežnosti, kakšna preciznost sloni za navideznim lebdenjem ...«

Tako postaja delo Tanje Pak tudi neke vrste spiritualna disciplina, s katero precizno opredeljuje neopredeljivo. Vedno znova jo fascinirajo megličave pokrajine, v katerih je horizont zabrisan – a ne zato, ker bi jo fasciniralo zabrisanje, ampak zato, da odkriva, v čem ostaja črta horizonta, ko je zabrisana – in v kaj se razpre ta črta, ko se ji približamo ... O tej črti je napisala tudi pesem. Vsekakor ne išče poti od neznanega k znanemu, ampak veliko zahtevnejšo pot

In her notes, which sometimes evolve into poetry, Tanja Pak writes about dreams and dreaming a lot. The hazes open space, where it is very easy to become lost in indefiniteness ... They may also open spaces for action if, through them, we recognise the space in between, where creative imagination magically transforms reality.

This requires precision, precise movement through space. Work with glass allows for no imprecision. A single careless, imprecise move, and everything can be destroyed. "Ecstasy is precise walking," said Tomaž Šalamun.

Tanja Pak, who is very much inspired by music – she herself has mentioned Arvo Pärt – is very aware that all her movements must be synchronised with what she is doing; in order to achieve the simple perfection in which her works – created in a collective process requiring continuously precise cooperation – remind me of Japanese Zen artefacts, she must cultivate all her senses and movements: just as she did in the physically very demanding project *Within / I held my breath, but the world kept on dreaming* when, in order to understand how physical effort transforms into weightlessness, she even enrolled in a ballet class for adults. Let me quote how she described the experience:

"When I was struggling with a really physically demanding project (setting up an exhibition inspired by Bachelard on 150 square metres, with thirty-two trees, 4.5 metres high, inside which slept glass branches), which was presented at Ljubljana Castle in December 2011, in one of the rare moments of rest, I came across a black-and-white video clip of Maya Plisetska dancing Saint-Saëns' *Dying swan* ... I was overwhelmed by the grace of her movement, which was touchingly beautiful ... I was thinking about this apparent weightlessness, infinite lightness ... that is achieved in ballet through one of the most difficult positions, *pointe*, as first carried out by Anna Pavlova ... I connected this with my work (the moment was right; for the *Within*, I mixed 1.6 tonnes of material, and carried it, moved it in moulds several times, so I could hardly feel my body), where the end result is clear, shining and almost without weight, but hides effort, dust, dirty work, aching fingers, a broken body ... I wanted to try out in glass where the limit is; how can material turn almost into its essence, a thought; how it can almost lose its presence in a material sense to become a thought, a feeling ... Which is the limit I can reach before it crushes under its own weight, while still preserving the greatest possible fragility, gentleness, etherealness ... I wanted to understand how to control a body (my own or glass), how much effort it takes to appear weightless, what precision supports the illusion of floating ..."

Thus Pak's work also becomes a spiritual discipline, with which she precisely defines the indefinable. Again and again, she is fascinated by hazy landscape, where the horizon is blurred, not because she is interested in the blurring, but in order to discover where the line of the horizon is when it is blurred, where it opens up to when we approach it ... She has also written a poem about the line. She is definitely not seeking a way from the unknown to known, but a more demanding journey, from the known to the unknown. Through her glass and her

od znanega k neznanemu. Skozi njeno steklo in skozi njeno meglico vstopamo v prostor, v katerem nas prevzame tisto čudenje, o katerem piše Dante v VII. Spevu *Víc*, ko nekaj vidiš in si govoriš: »Je ... Ni ...«.

Prav v tem hkratnem »je« in »ni« se odpira prostor magičnih transformacij, ki delujejo prav s silami in stvarmi, ki hkrati so in niso – in je že v tem čudežna sprevrnitev običajnega dojemanja sveta. Umetnica z vsem svojim delom poskuša artikulirati zavest o nekem magičnem prehodu. Ni naključje, da je bila zgodovina steklarske umetnosti povezana tudi z alkimijo. Knjigo *Ars vitraria experimentalis*, najpomembnejši baročni traktat o steklarstvu, je leta 1679 objavil Johann von Löwenstern-Kunckel, ki je bil sin alkimista in tudi sam alkimist.

Na umetničini novi razstavi osrednji prostor zavzema instalacija, v kateri je na skupno površino postavljenih enajst steklenih form. Ko se je umetnica odločila za to število, ni vedela, da je to véliko število magičnega prehoda. Prav to kaže, kako natančna je njena intuicija. Pri njej tudi vsako naključje dobiva svojo objektivnost.

In prav zaradi te natančnosti ne potrebuje njeno delo, da bi tematiziralo ta prehod, nikakršnih obskurantističnih referenc, ki bi vse skupaj samo zameglile; potrebuje samo do kraja pošteno razgrnitev samega procesa. V njenem delu prepoznamo kot magično prehajanje med prostori, ki so »na svetu« in prostori »zunaj sveta«, sámo dejstvo dihanja. Večkrat sem razmišljal o zelo preprostem dejstvu: če pride otrok na svet šele, ko se rodi, je pred tem v prostoru zunaj sveta, se pravi, da je notranjost telesa zunaj sveta; ko zrak v procesu dihanja prehaja med prostorom, ki je telesu zunanji, in notranjostjo telesa, nenehno neopazno prestopa mejo med prostorom na svetu in prostorom zunaj sveta. Naše dihanje se ne dogaja ne »na svetu« ne »zunaj sveta«, ampak v vmesnem prostoru med obojim. Zato je Rilke lahko »tihemu prijatelju mnogih daljav« napisal: »Kako tvoj dih še prostor pomnoži ... « Obenem pa se je Rilke zavedal steklene ostrine zraka, ki ga dihamo kot neko samoumevno prosojnost; njegov Malte Laurids Brigge piše o eksistenci strašnega v vsakem delcu zraka; vdihneš jo s prosojnim, v tebi pa dobi ostre, geometrične forme med organi ...

Tanja Pak o svojih steklih sama poudarja, da so zanjo vedno znova predvsem opna, lupina, kokon nekega diha ... In spet se najdemo v še drugačnem medprostoru, ko se vprašamo, čigav dih je to: nekaj manjših del je nadihala sama, večji objekti pa nastajajo v sodelovanju z mojstri v kolektivnih steklarskih delavnicah, pri čemer pa je to delo nezamenljivo njeno prav s tem, da v tem sodelovanju postaja tematizacija nekega nadosebnega diha. Tudi tam, kjer ne gre za pihano steklo; že v tem, da vroča snov izteče v po kalupu zmrznjeno obliko, naše doživetje pa jo znova odmrzne v začetno stanje. In nadosebna lepota teh steklenih objektov je v tudi tem, da umetnica z njimi ne išče tega, da bi bil vsak nekaj novega, ampak to, da so vsi nekaj vedno novega; ti objekti vznikajo kot nekaj vedno novega s čistostjo naravnih tvorb – ti objekti so vedno novi kot dihanje. In umetnica pravi: »Moje delo govori o dihanju.«

haze, we enter a space where we are overwhelmed by the wondering mentioned by Dante in Canto VII of *Purgatorio*, when you see something and you tell yourself: "It is, is not ...".

This concurrent "it is" and "is not" opens a space for magical transformations that act by using forces and things that are and yet are not; and in this lies the magical transformation of the established perception of the world. With her work, the artist seeks to articulate an awareness of a magical transition. It is no coincidence that the history of glass art was linked to alchemy. The book *Ars vitraria experimentalis*, the most significant Baroque publication on glasswork, was published in 1679 by Johann von Löwenstern-Kunckel, the son of an alchemist and an alchemist himself.

The central place at the artist's new exhibition is occupied by an installation with eleven glass forms on a shared platform. When Pak opted for this number, she did not know it was the master number of magical transition. This shows the precision of her intuition – even coincidences are imbued with objectivity.

And for this precision, her work needs no obscure references to thematise the transition; it needs only a place to honestly present the process. In her work, we see a magical transition between spaces "in this world" and spaces "outside this world", the very fact of breathing. I have often thought about a very simple fact: a baby comes into this world only when it is born, so it is outside this world before, which means that the inside of the body is outside this world; when air transitions between the space outside the body and the inside of the body in the process of breathing, it inconspicuously passes through the border between the space in this world and outside of it. Therefore, our breathing does not take place "in the world" or "outside the world", but rather in the space between both. Therefore, Rilke was able to write to "his quiet friend of many distances": "how your breath still multiplies all space ..." At the same time, Rilke was aware of the glassy sharpness of air, which we breathe as a self-evident transparency: his Malte Laurids Brigge writes about the existence of the horrible in every particle of air, "you breathe it in without being able to see it, but it ... assumes pointed geometrical forms among your organs"...

With reference to her glass works, Pak herself says that she sees them again and again as membranes, shells, cocoons of a breath ... Thus we find ourselves again in a different space in-between, wondering whose breath it was: she blew some smaller works herself, while bigger objects are created in collaboration with masters in collective glassworks, but her work is still identifiably hers as, through collaboration, supra-personal breath is thematised – even when it is not blown glass: even when hot material flows into a mould to be transformed into a frozen form and our experience of it unfreezes it into a primary state. The supra-personal beauty of these glass objects is also due to the fact that the artist does not seek to make something new with each new one, but that they are something new as they emerge as new with the pureness of natural forms – they are always new in the sense that breathing is always new. The artist says: "My work is about breathing."





Nataša Ivanović

INTERVJU S TANJO PAK

NI: Preden preidemo na pogovor o meddihu, ki je tema skulptur, predstavljenih na razstavi v Galeriji TR3 in v pričujočem katalogu, me zanimajo vaši začetki. Kdaj in kako ste vzljubili delo, neprestano soočanje s steklom, materijo, ki vas definira kot oblikovalko, umetnico?

TP: Odraščala sem v Rogaški Slatini, kjer sem bila nenehno obdana z odbleski svetlobe v zračnih mehurčkih brbotajoče zdraviliške vode in z vznemirljivim vonjem zažganega lesa, ki je spremljal leno prelivanje žareče steklene mase. Ta se je spreminjala pred mojimi otroškimi očmi in se prav kmalu ohlajena lesketala kot tisti mehurčki prej. Najbrž se je takrat rodila ljubezen, ki sem jo razumela šele mnogo kasneje.

Oče je bil oblikovalec stekla v Steklarski šoli Rogaška Slatina, izjemen, a mnogo pred svojim časom tako v estetiki kot v dojetanju oblikovanja, da bi znali razumeti in dovolj ceniti njegovo delo. Name ni vplival z neposrednim učenjem, temveč z ljubeznijo do čiste forme in svetlobe v nji.

Ker je bilo stekla okrog mene v zgodnjih letih preveč, sem se sama želela od njega oddaljiti. Diplomirala sem iz industrijskega oblikovanja na Akademiji za likovno umetnost v Ljubljani. Vendar sem se na magistrskem študiju umetnosti na Royal College of Art v Londonu osredotočila na raziskovanje stekla, ker me je kljub vsemu s svojo neulovljivostjo in globino popolnoma zasvojilo.

Royal College of Art je bil izjemna izkušnja. Izredno zahtevna in stresna. Ampak z angleško strogostjo so vzpodbujali našo ustvarjalnost in izvirnost. V tistem obdobju sem se zavestno odločila, da bom ustvarjala naprej na vseh treh področjih: industrijskem oblikovanju uporabnega stekla, prostorskih umetniških postavitvah in skulpturi. Kasneje sem se velikokrat izpopolnjevala na seminarjih, delavnicah in gostovanjih po vsem svetu. V življenju sem imela srečo, da sem se učila od najboljših, v takšnem okolju se ti odpirajo nove in nove možnosti. Prepojili so me s prepričanjem, da je z voljo mogoče uresničiti vse, in da so razpoke tiste, iz katerih črpamo modrost in moč za svojo pot.

Steklo mi predstavlja nenehni izziv, nenehno se preizkušava in iščeva meje drug drugega. Ustreza mi kot medij, v katerem raziskujem možnosti izraza osebnih vprašanj in stisk posameznika. Eterično in izmuzljivo podobo stekla uporabljam za vizualizacijo njegovih hrepenenj in čustvovanj.

Skozi steklo mislim občutke. Ti me umeščajo v ta prostor tukaj in zdaj. Zaradi le-njih svetlobe postanem neponovljiva v prostoru in času. Forma je ponovljiva vedno in povsod. Tisto, kar je neoprijemljivo znotraj nje in kipi nevidno čez njene robove, pač ne. Steklo je tisto, ki mi omogoča praskati po plasteh, jih odkrivati drugo za drugo, sanjati priprtih oči in se zbujati iz sanj vedno znova in znova z drugačnimi pogledi, v drugačnih svetlobah. Steklo drži moje misli v neizrečenem in nedefiniranem prostoru, skoraj rešeno težnosti,

INTERVIEW WITH TANJA PAK

NI: Before moving on to the breath in between, the theme of your works exhibited in TR3 Gallery and the accompanying catalogue, please explain how you began working. What made you fall in love with this work and at what age, what drew you to the continuous examination of glass, the material that defines you as a designer and as an artist?

TP: I grew up in Rogaška Slatina, constantly surrounded by glimmering light in water bubbles at the local spa, and the exciting smell of burnt wood that accompanied the lazy flow of glowing glass mass. The mass was transformed right before my young eyes, and soon cooled down into the glimmer of those water bubbles. That’s when my love was most likely born, though it took quite some time for me to understand it.

My father worked as a glass designer in Rogaška glassworks – he was exceptional, but way before his time both in terms of aesthetics and his attitude to design, which made it impossible for others to understand and appreciate his work. His influence came less as a direct transfer of knowledge and more as an inherited love of pure form and the light within it.

Overwhelmed by glass in my early years, I tried to distance myself from it. I graduated in industrial design from the Academy of Fine Arts in Ljubljana. It was only during my MA studies at the Royal College of Art in London that I focused on exploring glass, becoming completely enraptured by its elusiveness and depth.

The time I spent at the Royal College of Art proved to be an exceptional experience. Very demanding and stressful, but fulfilling. The professors opted for a distinctly British strictness, using it to encourage our creativeness and originality. During my time there, I consciously decided to develop my creative path in all three areas: applied glass product design, artistic spatial installations and sculpture. I continued to build on my skills and knowledge through frequent seminars, workshops and residencies all around the world. Throughout my life I have had the opportunity to learn from the best, a blessing which has opened door after door after door. My teachers instilled in me a conviction that anything is possible, as long as you power on, and that wisdom and strength to continue are to be found in the cracks.

Glass presents a constant challenge; we are constantly testing each other and pushing each other’s limits. As a medium it suits me when searching for ways to express my personal issues and difficulties individuals face. Its ethereal and elusive image helps me visualise their longing and emotions.

I process my feelings through glass. They make me present in the here and now. Their light makes me singular, unrepeatable in space and time. While form can always be repeated, the intangible that lies in it and invisibly flows over its edges never can be. Glass allows me to scratch the layers, discover them one by one, dream with my eyes slightly open, and wake up from my dreams with a different perspective, in different light, time and time again. Glass holds my thoughts in an unspoken and undefined space, almost free of gravity, barely more than a thought

skoraj samo misel in njena sled. V naslednjem hipu postane spet prisotno, nežno skrito in mehko, izginjajoče in pomirjeno, v senci in z objemajočimi naloženimi plašči mehkode in nedefiniranosti ... Nič več materija, zgolj svetloba, ujeta v materiji, in senca, ki jo izrisuje v resničnost. Zame je to poezija, ki me vedno znova premami. Njegova krhkost zbujajo željo, spomin in hrepenenje. Skozenj opazujem svet onkraj, ves izmuzljiv in drugačen od tistega v meni.

NI: Zakaj *Dih*? Kdaj je prišlo do tega preloma v vašem opusu oziroma ali gre za neko nadgradnjo prejšnjih del, popolni odklon od njih ali pa za prisotno zavedanje prav tega diha, od katerega je odvisen končni videz steklenega objekta?

TP: Ko gledam nazaj, mislim, da je do večje samozavesti pri izražanju mojega intimnega sveta prišlo že pred kakšnimi osmimi leti, ob postavitvi *Odsanjanja* v Kazematah Ljubljanskega gradu, v kateri govorim o hrepenenju in iskanju svetlobe, v *Hip zatem – Alina*, kjer se osredotočam na občutenje posamičnega tona ali odtenka občutenja. In potem v *Znotraj/I held my breath but the world kept on dreaming*, kjer v iskanju širin in prostora diha hkrati preizprašujem svojo umeščenost v ta prostor in čas, ter v *Pointé*, kjer želim pripreti oči in uiti v navidezno breztežnost. Zdi se mi, da je bilo to obdobje, ko sem spoznavala, kako videti sebe in razumeti svoje čutenje in odnos do sveta, ko sem se zavedela, kdo sem v resnici, brez odtisov tujih pogledov. Mislim, da je za umetnika bistveno, da se zaveda svoje resnice. Zame je najbrž to ta dih. Jaz, tam znotraj.

Torej, vprašanje prisotnosti in oblike diha v vsej njegovi simboliki že dolgo zaznamuje moje delo.

Ko sem bila pred štirimi leti na rezidenci v Corning Museum of Glass v ZDA, sva s kolegico sami pihali objekte, ki tvorijo skulpturo, ki sem jo razstavila na pravkar zaključeni razstavi v Steklenem atriju Mestne hiše Ljubljana in v kateri preizprašujem vprašanje oblik naše samosti in ranljivosti:

»Vprašam se, včasih, ali je volumen mojega diha vedno enak. Ko zaplava v prostoru tišine pred naslednjim vdihom, ali še zavzema isti prostor v veselju? Je njegov odmev tišji, ko je sam? Ga je kaj manj? Kaj več? Je njegova duša še vedno enako širna?«

Potem sem želela narediti ta dih večji, mehkejši, tak, da bi vabil k dotiku, ki ga v toploti izbožlaš v življenje. Ko sem bila povabljen na simpozij na severu Češke, sem ravno razmišljala o občutku samote, ki te zaprede kot bela opna v svoje ovoje, občutku, da slišiš odmev svojega dihanja in predihavaš čas do naslednjega vdih, ko se svet navidezno skrči v opno izsanjanih misli ... Takrat so najprej nastali veliki kokoni, ti so skupaj z zvokom, ki ga je oblikoval Milko Lazar, in programirano svetlobo, ki je nastala s sodelovanjem s Precioso Lighting, tvorili prostorsko postavitev na razstavi v Novem Boru. Potem so dihi postali preprostejši, postali so dejansko zamrznjen trenutek, v katerem obstanem negibna, čakajoč, da se svet okoli mene spet zgane in jaz v njem.

V Vsaksebi sem se spraševala o razhajanju in zbliževanju. O tem, kako se eno ne zmore razcepiti v dvoje, ker ga nevidna sila še vedno zadržuje, in o nezmognosti spet postati eno, ker je med obema deloma že pretesen vozal ... O tem, kako negiben in tesen je lahko prostor odhajanja in zbliževanja. O srečanjih, slovesu in vezeh. *Dih*i, dihi pa so prostor kontemplacije in miru. So tih čas zazrtosti vase in poslušanja bitja lastnega srca. So čas med vsem, kar je bilo,

and its trace. The next moment it is present again, gently concealed and soft, disappearing and tranquil, in the shadow with hugging coat piles of softness and vagueness ... No longer matter, just the light captured within, and a shadow, outlining it into reality. I see it as poetry which never ceases to entice me. Its fragility spurs wishes, memory and yearning. Through its lens, I observe the world on the other side, so elusive and different from the one inside me.

NI: Why the title *Breaths*? When did this breakthrough occur – did it build on previous works, was it a complete deviation from them or an awareness of how the final appearance of a glass object depends on breath?

TP: Looking back, I think the confidence to express my intimate world came some eight years ago, when I was setting up the *Dreaming Away* exhibition in the Ljubljana Castle's Kazemate, as well as during *The Moment After – Alina*. The first project was a statement on yearning and search for light, the second a focus on feeling individual notes or shades of feelings. It continued with *Within/I held my breath but the world kept on dreaming*, where I examine my position in this particular space and time while exploring the horizons and space of breath. The same goes for *Pointé*, where I wish to squint my eyes and escape into fictitious weightlessness. I believe this period was about me becoming aware of how I should see myself and understand my attitudes and fillings for this world, when I realised who I really was, without the traces of the gazes of others. I hold the awareness of one's truth to be essential for every artist. To me, the breath is obviously it. Me, in there.

The question of presence and form of breath in its entire symbolism has thus long played an important role in my work.

Attending an artist-in-residency programme in Corning Museum of Glass in the USA, my colleague and I personally blew objects forming the sculpture just recently exhibited in the Glass Atrium of Ljubljana City Hall. The subject of this exhibition was examining which forms our solitude and vulnerability take:

"I sometimes ask myself, is the volume of my breath always the same? When it floats in the space of silence preceding the next breath, does it still occupy the same space in the universe? Is its echo quieter when it is all alone? Is there less of it? More? Is its soul still as large?"

Next I wanted to make the breath larger, softer, inviting to the touch, calling on you to warmly caress it into life. I was invited to a symposium in the north of the Czech Republic, when I was pondering the feeling of solitude, one which cocoons you like a white membrane, the feeling of hearing the echo of your own breathing and breathing through to the next breath, when the world seemingly shrinks into a veil of dreamt out thoughts ... This led to the creation of large cocoons, which formed the spatial installation at the exhibition in Novy Bor, accompanied by the sound created by Milko Lazar, and programmed lighting created in cooperation with Preciosa Lighting. Breaths created afterwards became simpler; they turned into a literally frozen moment, in which I stood motionless, waiting for the world around me to move and me with it.

Congé questioned parting and approaching, based on an insplittable entity, held together by an invisible force, and the inability to become one again, as the knot between the two grows too tight ... On the ability for motionless and tightness of the space encompassing parting and approaching. On meetings, goodbyes and connections.

in vsem, kar bo. Neskončen trenutek tukaj in zdaj, negiben in hkrati razvlečen v brezčasje.

Zato odgovor na vaše vprašanje ni enoznačen. Ne gre za hipno odločitev za izvedbo projekta, temveč za proces, predvsem za moj osebni proces, ki ga kot dih izražam skozi steklo in umetniške postavitve. Raste in spreminja se z mano, v njem je vselej sled prehojenih korakov.

NI: Če gledamo na *Dihe* in *Vsaksebi* samo tehnično, so ti objekti hkrati zelo trdni v materialu in krhki v vsebini in obstoju. Kot vas dojemam, predstavljajo tudi dualnost umetnice, ki se je zmožna s svojo krhko postavo, a z močno umetniško voljo spopasti s tehnično obdelavo takšnih objektov, ki ni niti malo enostavna. Nam lahko opišete razmere in postopek nastanka *Dihov*?

TP: Spregovoriva torej o prav teh skulpturah, ki so na razstavi. Nastale so z ekipo, ki mi je bila dodeljena ob priložnosti sodelovanja na mednarodnem simpoziju v Novem Boru leta 2015 na Češkem, v podjetju Preciosa Lighting.

Ker je za delo v ročno pihanem steklu ključna komunikacija z ekipo in poznavanje njenih zmožnosti, sem se dva meseca pred simpozijem odpeljala z zalogo dobre glasbe v avtu na sever Češke, da se z ekipo spoznamo in da se prepričam, kaj lahko skupaj naredimo in kje so naše meje. To je bilo ključno za naše delo. Preden ugotoviš, kako priti do želene oblike prostoročno pihanega stekla, je potrebnih veliko poskusov, veliko ur, dni, tednov. Vzeli smo si čas. Res je, da so bili opremljeni z ogromnimi pečmi za dogrevanje in hladilnicami za izdelke velikih dimenzij, kakršnih v našem okolju nikakor ne bi mogla narediti. Oprema je bila fantastična in docela sem jo izkoristila, saj so pričujoči kosi že na skrajni meji tega, kar se sploh še da izdelati na roke, gre za izjemno veliko težo žareče zmuzljive gmote, ki jo mojstri vrte na koncu kovinske palice. Posamičen kos iz več plasti prozornega in belega ali opalin stekla smo vročega obdelovali dve do tri ure, nenehno iščoč njegovo ravnotežje pred odprto plinsko pečjo izjemnih dimenzij, v kateri je hrumel plamen s 1100 stopinjami ... Usklajeno smo pihali in z dlanjo, zaščiteno le s plastjo mokrega papirja, izbožali formo vročega in mehkega stekla, z vdih in izdih skozi steklarsko cev smo določali njegovo obliko ... Pomagali sta nam le vročina in gravitacija ter zrak naših pljuč. Pri tem procesu je potrebna popolna usklajenost gibov vseh sodelujočih, po navadi nas je na enem kosu delalo pet do osem, delčki sekunde odločajo o formi. Zame je vse to »en tak« izjemno natančen balet. Jezikovne pregrade odpadejo, ker za to ni časa, treba je predvideti, zaznati gib drugega brez besed, treba se je odločiti v sekundi in znati odnehati ... Več kot polovica dihov je končala v črepinjah na tleh, nekaj se jih je razbilo v postopkih dodelave, v hlajenju, brušenju in peskanju. Vročina, znoj, opekline, smrad gorečega papirja in umazane dlani. In zadovoljni nasmehi ob vzklikih ekipe, ki ujame ta dih v mehko opno.

Ja, res je, zame je mehka, topla, izbožana. Steklo je tudi takšno, ko dihaš z njim.

NI: Njihov končni videz je odvisen predvsem od sodelovanja z ekipo?

TP: Šele ob vašem vprašanju sem se zavedela, da je to pravzaprav moja prva samostojna razstava, kjer razstavljam samo pihano steklo. To pomeni, da pri nobeni teh skulptur nisem odvisna popolnoma

Breaths – breaths are a space of contemplation and peace. They are a quiet time for introspection and listening to one's own heartbeat. A time between all that was and everything still to come. An infinite moment here and now, motionless and yet stretched to infinity. There is not one single answer to your question. It is not about a momentary decision to carry out a project, but rather a process, particularly my personal process, expressed through glass and art installations as breath. It grows and transforms with me, always carrying traces of steps already taken.

NI: Looking at the objects in *Breaths* and *Congé* from a technical perspective, they are of sturdy material and fragile substance and existence. Looking at you it is hard not to see them as representation of your own duality as an artist of such petite physical figure, able to tackle the highly complex technical process with your strong artistic will. Can you tell us how *Breaths* were made?

TP: Let us talk then about the works presented at this exhibition. They were manufactured with the help of a team, assigned to me at the Novy Bor 2015 International Symposium in the Czech Republic, in the facilities of Preciosa Lighting Company.

Communication with the team and realistic expectations of its ability are crucial when making hand blown glass. For this reason I decided to pack a carload of good music and make a road trip to the north of the Czech Republic two months prior to the symposium. I wanted to meet the team and get a better feeling of what we could accomplish and where our limits laid. This was vital to our work. Creating the desired form of hand blown glass takes many attempts, hours, days, weeks. We took our time. We did have access to enormous furnaces and coolers for large-format objects, which would be impossible to manufacture in my area. The equipment was fantastic, and I took full advantage of it, as the finished pieces are at the very limit of hand made capacity. The weight of the glowing elusive masses was enormous for the masters to spin at the ends of metal rods. We worked on individual pieces from several layers of transparent and white or opaline glass for two to three hours, trying to find its balance while standing in front of an enormous open glass furnace, burning at 1100 degrees Centigrade ... With coordinated blowing we, caressed the form out of hot and soft glass by hand, protected only with a layer of wet paper, determining its shape by breathing in and out through the blowing pipe ... We relied solely on heat, gravity and the air in our lungs. The process required perfect coordination of movements from everyone involved – on average, five to eight people worked on a piece – and the form was determined by fractions of a second. I see it as a highly precise piece of ballet. Language barriers disappear, there is no time for words; you have to predict, detect the movements of others, without speaking, deciding in a split second and knowing when to stop ... Over half of the breaths ended up in broken pieces, some cracked in the ensuing procedures, cooling, polishing or sandblasting. The heat, the sweat, the burns, the putrid smell of burning paper and blackened hands. And pleased smiles at the sound of cheers from the team who managed to catch its breath in a soft membrane.

It is true; to me, it is soft, warm, caressed into being. Glass is like that when you breathe with it.

NI: Their final appearance depends largely on teamwork?

TP: Not until you posed this question did I realise that this is my first solo exhibition showing only blown glass. Consequently, not one of these works depended only on me, as is usually the case, but on

samo od sebe, kot sem sicer, temveč od komunikacije in sozvočja z ekipo.

Delo je dinamično in, kot sem omenila, ga rada primerjam z natančno določeno koreografijo, ki pa vendarle dovoljuje improvizacijo ter zato zahteva popolno pozornost vseh sodelujočih. Uživam v njem. A tudi zato, ker vem, da se bom iz dinamične in glasne proizvodnje pihanega stekla lahko kmalu umaknila v tiho samotnost svojega ateljeja. Ti preskoki so zame vedno pomenili neke vrste oddih, poživljajoč odmik in novo energijo. Prav zato rada delam na vseh področjih hkrati, oblikovanju, umetnosti in kot profesorica na Akademiji.

NI: Postavitev je definirana z enajstimi *Dih*i, ki se na dvignjenem podestu zaključí z *Vsaksebi*. Gre za svilnato bel stekleni objekt, ki hkrati v svoji ožini združuje in cepi dve neenakomerni polovici. Kaj za vas predstavlja *Vsaksebi* in v katerem trenutku vašega življenja je prišlo do ideje in njegove realizacije?

TP: Preprosto, *Vsaksebi* predstavlja trenutek mojega življenja. (nasmeh). Trenutek, ki dozdevno traja neskončno dolgo in se spremeni v stanje. Stanje, v katerem oddaljevanje postaja zblíževanje in približevanje povzroči odmik. Mi pa živimo v prostoru vmes in predihavamo čas do trenutka, ko se bo svet spet z nami vred zganil dalje.

NI: Na razstavi je prvič prisotna tudi fotografija, ki spremlja vaše umetniško delo. Gre bolj za utrinke, spomine s potovanj. Nastajajo popolnoma nenačrtovano, brez konkretizacije prostora, v katerem ste bili takrat prisotni. Tu ne moremo razmišljati o značilnostih nekega kraja, ampak lahko zgolj vizualno definiramo ujeti dih, prenesen pozneje v medij stekla. Kako je prišlo do te povezave med oblikovanjem stekla in fotografijo?

TP: Povezave med fotografijo in steklom zelo dolgo nisem ozavestila.

Skozi fotografijo sem lovila občutke, skozi kukalo sem dobesečno spolzela v kader in ga vsrkala vase. Teh zapisov nisem skorajda nikoli odprla, pomemben mi je bil spomin pogleda in ujetega trenutka, ki se je skozi objektiv fotoaparata vtisnil vame.

Ne da bi razmišljala o konkretnih fotografijah, sem te izkušnje pogledov in občutke v njih, ne dobesečne pokrajine, prevajala v steklo. Ampak ti občutki niso nikoli splošni, odvisni so od tega, kakšni vstopamo v prostor. Nekdo drug bi tisto tišino slišal drugače. Ali bi jo tudi sama, v nekem drugem trenutku, razumela drugače.

Mislím, da gre pri fotografiji za moj iskren pogled na svet. Tako ga doživljam. Skozi na pol priprte oči, kot sled vtisov in zaznav, ki se vtisnejo vame, z zabrisanimi linijami in nedefiniranimi ločnicami med tukaj in tam. Opazujem ga skozi odbleske in skozi opno, skozi katero nič, kar vidim, ni resnično, kot ni resnično tisto, kar vidijo tisti, ki skozi opno gledajo na mojo stran.

Ker gre za moj pogled, je razumljivo, da najlažje o svojem delu v steklu govorim skozi fotografijo, ta zajema občutja, ki jih prevajam v drug material. Zame je to vse neločljiva celota.

NI: Razmišljanje o *Dihu* ima tudi več, če jih lahko tako poimenujemo, simboličnih konotacij, ki so povezane z vašimi potovanji. Nam lahko kaj več poveste o teh srečanjih z naravo, pri katerih je določen pogled ali doživetje sprožilo dih?

communication and harmony with the team.

The work is dynamic and, as already mentioned, I like to compare it to precise choreography that still allows improvisation, thus requiring the full attention of everyone involved. I love it. Another reason for my enthusiasm is the awareness of the fact that I will soon be able to retire to the quiet solitude of my own studio, away from the dynamic and loud production of blown glass. I have always taken these leaps as a break, an invigorating retreat and fresh energy. This is precisely why I like to work in several different areas at once: design, art and teaching at the academy.

NI: The installation is defined by eleven *Breaths*, ending with *Congé* on a raised platform. This is a silky white glass object with a narrow strip, both uniting and separating two uneven halves. What does *Congé* mean to you, and when did you come up with the idea for it and then the opportunity to realise it?

TP: It was very simple. *Congé* is a moment from my life. (smiles). A moment that seems to last forever, and turns into a condition. A condition where distancing turns into coming closer and coming closer causes a distance. We live in the space in-between, and breathe through time until the moment when the world moves on, taking us along.

NI: This exhibition includes photographs alongside your art for the first time. The photographs are mostly impressions, memories of your travels. They are created fully unintentionally, never specifying the place where you were at the time they were taken. It is impossible to think about the characteristics of a place, one can only visually define its breath, later transferred into the medium of glass. How did this connection between glass and photography come about?

TP: I was not consciously aware of the connection between photography and glass for a long time.

I captured feelings through photographs – through the peephole, I literally slid into the scene and absorbed it. I hardly ever checked these notes. It was the memory of the gaze and the captured moment imprinted into me through the lens that was important to me.

Without thinking of particular photographs, I translated the experience of the gazes in them – not literal landscapes – into glass. But these feelings are never generic; they depend on what state we are in when we enter the room. The same silence would sound completely different to someone else. Even I would comprehend it differently in another moment.

I believe photography reveals my true view of the world. That is my experience of it. Through eyes half-closed, as a trace of impressions and perceptions imprinted in me, with blurred lines and undefined borderlines between here and there. I observe it through reflections and through the membrane through which nothing I see is real, as is nothing that those looking over to my side through the membrane see.

Because this is my gaze, I understandably find it easiest to speak about my work in glass through photography, as it captures the emotions that I translate into a different material. To me, this is an inseparable whole.

NI: Thinking about *Breath* also has several, symbolic connotations, as it were, connected to your travels. Can you tell us a bit more about your encounters with nature where a gaze or experience triggered a breath?

TP: Najbrž gre za doživetje teh pokrajin, predvsem njihovih širin, v katerih imam občutek svobode in prostora, da diham. Spomnim se trenutka sredi puščave, ko sem se v popolni tišini in negibnosti trenutka zavedela, da se vesolje vrti v svojem ritmu in da je vsak delček vanj položen tako, kot je prav. Da sem del te neizmernosti, ne glede na kar koli. Spomnim se miru, ki me je navdal ob tem. Pristnosti. Takrat sem ozavestila, kaj pomeni čistost *biti*. Čistost misli, delovanja, iskrenost do sebe. Potem so tukaj še drugi spomini, iskanje popolne beline v puščavah Nove Mehike, ko sem se zavedela, da vsaka belina potrebuje senco, da jo izriše v prisotnost. Kot človek, ki brez sence ni resničen. Poti, ki so me primorale, da se zazrem vase, če ne takrat, pa kasneje. In snežni vihar na skrajnem robu kopnega na arktičnem krogu, kjer sem lovila izginjajočo linijo horizonta in se spraševala, kje je meja med biti in ne biti.

NI: Na svojih poteh se poigrate ne samo z objektivom, temveč tudi z besedo. Nastajajo hipni zapisi verzov. Gre za isti občutek, ko ujamete dih v objektiv, na papir ali v steklo?

TP: V skoraj že dematerializirano snov skušam ujeti občutke in esenco misli, sanje, hrepenenja, nenehno iščoč širino, prostranost in tišino v neizmernosti dejanskih pokrajin, ki zrcalijo tiste znotraj mojega zavedanja.

Občutja teh poti zajemam in razčlenjujem s fotografijo v vizualne podobe, fotografija pa zaradi razmerij in pogledov večinoma postane abstraktna, in z besedami, ki v izlivih včasih ujamejo ta občutja v zapis. Pravzaprav gre za enake zapise, moje besede so, prav tako kot moje fotografije ali steklo, le na pol definirane, ostanejo lebdeče, kot vonj ali nedoločen spomin.

Bela
Bela tišina, ki išče sence
da bi jo izrisale v prisotnost
med tukaj in Tam
lebdim v gluhi ne-bití

Včasih dopišem kak verz k predstavitvam del. Kot preskok poetične iskre. Kot da se preko pesniških besed vračam iz dvogovora s steklom, ki je poezija tišine. Besede včasih ujamejo občutja v zapis, ki je enako pomemben kot vizualna podoba. Občutenje je isto, le da vsak medij odpira sebi lastne nianse poetičnega. Ustvarjanje je odgrinjanje, razkrivanje te poetike s pravimi rezi in potezami.



TP: It is probably about the experience of landscapes, particularly in terms of their vastness, where I feel free and sense the space, breathe it. I remember a moment in the middle of the desert when I became aware, in complete silence, in a motionless moment, that the universe spins in its own rhythms and every part is in its exact place. That I am a part of this vastness, regardless of everything. I remember the peace I was overwhelmed with. The authenticity. I realised then what the purity of *being* means. The purity of thought, action, honesty to oneself. Then there are other memories: finding the perfect whiteness in the deserts of New Mexico, when I realised that each whiteness needs a shadow to draw it into presence. Just like a person in the moment or in retrospect. And a snow storm at the very edge of land in the Arctic Circle, where I was trying to catch the disappearing line of the horizon and wondered where the line between being and non-being was.

NI: On your journey, you not only play with the lens, but also with the word, creating momentary verse notes. Is this the same feeling when you capture a breath in a lens, on paper or in glass?

TP: I try to capture sensations and the essence of thoughts, dreams, yearning, into almost de-materialised matter, constantly seeking immensity and silence in the vastness of actual landscapes, mirroring those inside my awareness.

I access and analyse these feelings through photography in the sense of capturing a visual image, which becomes abstract, mostly due to its proportions. And through words, which sometimes capture these sensations in the outpouring of written notes, which for me are as significant as the visual image.

White
white silence
searches for shadows
to draw it into presence
between Here and There
I float in deaf non-being

Sometimes I supplement the written information with a verse. As if a poetic spark jumps. As if, through poetry, I return from a dialogue with glass, which is the poetry of silence. Words sometimes encode feelings just as strongly as the visual image does. The sensation is the same, but every medium opens its own unique shade of the poetic. Creating means unveiling the curtains, revealing the poetics with the right cuts and moves.



NI: Pri *Dihih* nikoli ne veste, kako bodo videti na koncu?

TP: Čisto natančno ne. Lahko predvidiš, slutiš, lahko veš, kam potuješ. In ta pot zahteva vso tvojo osredotočenost. Sama pravim, da se moraš zlititi z vročim steklom in razumeti *njegov* dih. Se nanj odzvati. Seveda veš, kje in kako ga moraš segrevati, kjer želiš, da je steklo mehkejše, da ga lahko izsesaš v vdolbino ali izpihneš v izboklino, medtem ko ga na drugi strani hladiš, da obstane. In skozi teste pripraviš in predvidiš posamezne faze dela in preprijeme, vse to vnaprej predvidimo. A steklo je, sploh v takšni veliki masi in velikosti, živo in odvisno od nešteti dejavnikov. V vseh tistih delčkih sekunde se je treba izjemno pozorno nenehno odločati in odzivati. To je tisto, kar je v tem procesu tako magično. Verjemite, popolnoma te prevzame. Ko so kipi ohlajeni, je mogoče nadaljnje postopke natančno predvideti, in takrat se emocionalno lahko od njih odmaknem.

NI: Na eni strani dih lahko beremo tudi kot medprostor. Na kakšne načine?

TP: Zdi se mi, da vsak od nas živi znotraj koprene svojega minljivega sveta, napolnjenega s spomini, čustvi in hrepenenji. Občutek samote in brezčasnosti se včasih razpne do bolečine in svet se ustavi v nemem kriku. Takrat iščem uglasitev s seboj in s svetom zunaj. Veliko razmišljam o odsotnosti kot o nenavzočnosti, odtujenosti, hrepenenju. Verjetno jih dojamemo kot lepe zato, ker gre nenazadnje za dih, za občutje življenja, kakršno koli že je.

Znotraj opne svojega sveta čakam v širokem polju meddiha. Vibracije iz prostora zunaj mojega jaza prehajajo med Tukaj in Tam, popačene in deformirane od poti, ki jo preidejo.

V meddihu si sam, takrat si ujet v prostoru vmes in hlastaš za zrakom v svojem intimnem prostoru doživljanj, ki ga, kot rečeno, imenujem med-dih. Dih obstane v zamrznjenem trenutku časa in se uglaši s tišino, ki odzvanja od lastnih sten. Svet se skrči v opno belega zvoka izsanjanih misli. Nekdo je zapisal: *Sreča je biti skrit, gorje ne najden*. Morda je prostor meddiha tudi ta prostor. Ko nisi najden. Še ne najden. Čakajoč.

NI: Na drugi strani pa kot bolečino, ki jo sprožijo spomini ali pa že samo fizično zajemanje sape ob izdelavi steklenega objekta oziroma pri ohranjanju življenja.

TP: Bolečina je pozitivna izkušnja, če jo znaš videti in razumeti ter narediti z novim zavedanjem stabilnejši korak. Enako je s spomini. Tudi boleče spomine objamemo, ker nas gradijo takšne, kot smo v tem trenutku. Zato je vsak dih enako dragocen, svetel in temen, tisti, v katerem smo se zmotili, in tisti, v katerem smo s smehom segli proti soncu. Med enim in drugim dihom je zavedanje naslednjega vdiha. Tudi kadar je čas med njima dolg, nam zavest, da naslednji vdih pride, daje moč, da preidemo čez stanje meddiha. Kadar naslednji vdih ne sledi, namreč nastopi smrt. Ne-bit. Dokler obljuba vdiha je, Sem, četudi negibna.

NI: Na razstavi sicer niso prikazani črni *Dih*i, pa vendarle sočasno nastajajo ob belih. Kakšna je razlika? In kakšni so vaši načrti?

TP: Črna je zemeljska protiutež eteričnih belih. Je poligon odkrivanja čutne taktilnosti matirane svilnate površine in ostrih sijajnih zarez odbite svetlobe.

NI: With *Breaths* you never know what the final appearance will be?

TP: Not specifically. One can predict, sense its future form, know where it's headed. But this journey requires full attention. I often say that you have to become one with the hot glass and understand *its* breath. Respond to it. Naturally, you know where and how to heat it, where you want it to be softer so you can suck out a crevice or blow a bulge, while cooling it to make it last. Testing allows you to prepare and predict individual stages and moves, all this is planned. However, glass, particularly of such mass and size, is alive and depends on numerous factors. In all these fractions of a second, we must be fully focused, take decisions and respond. This is what makes the process magical. I promise it is enrapturing. When the sculptures cool down, the next procedures can be planned precisely, so I can emotionally distance myself.

NI: Breath can also be read as a space in between. How?

TP: Everyone seems to live inside the veil of their own transient world, filled with memories, emotions and yearnings. Sometimes, a sense of solitude and timelessness unfolds and makes one gasp for air in their own intimate space of experience, which I call the breath in between. It is the moment a breath stops ... That is where I try to become attuned with the world inside and outside of me. I often think about absence in the sense of non-presence, alienation, yearning. They probably seem beautiful because they are ultimately about breath, sensing life, however it may be.

I am waiting in the vastness of the breath in between. Vibrations from the space outside me travel between Here and There, distorted and deformed from the journey.

In the breath in between you are alone, caught in the space in between, gasping for air in the intimate space of your experience, an interstitial breath, as it were, that I call a breath in between. The breath becomes suspended in a frozen moment in time, attuned with the silence and resounding from its own walls. The world shrinks into a membrane of white noise of dreamt out thoughts.

Someone once wrote: *It is a joy to be hidden, and disaster not to be found*. Perhaps the breath in between is also that space. When you are not found. At least not found yet - waiting.

NI: There is also the pain triggered by memories or even the physical breath when making a glass object or keeping it alive.

TP: Pain is a positive experience if one knows how to see it and understand it, use it to make your next step more secure. The same is true of memories. We embrace even the most painful ones, because they make us who we are. Therefore, every breath is as valuable as the next, bright and dark, when we make a mistake or reach for the sun. From one breath to the next, there is an awareness of the next one. Even when there is a long pause between them, awareness that the next one will come gives us the strength to persevere in the breath in between. Because when there is no next breath, there is death. Non-being. As long as the promise of a breath exists, I exist, although motionless.

NI: While the exhibition does not show black *Breaths*, they were created alongside the white ones. How are they different? What are your plans for the future?



V prostorskih postavitvah sta prisotni obe, črna in bela. Predvsem zaradi teže in svetlobe, ki ju nosita.

Načrti? Zavedam se moči in prostora za nov vdih. Gotovo bom temo razvijala in nadaljevala. Jeseni odhajam na dvoipolmesečno rezidenco v Musée du Verre v Franciji in veselim se, da bom tam lahko uresničila naslednje večje korake.

NI: Na postavitvi nastopa skupina *Dihov*. Zakaj skupina, zakaj jih je več? Kakor je predstavljeno na razstavi, svoje misli in doživljanja pripovedujete v prostorskih postavitvah. Kaj vam to pomeni? In za konec, kaj se zgodi, ko se razstava odpre javnosti?

TP: Ker vsak od nas živi svoj svet znotraj koprene svojega intimnega prostora. Naša srečanja so dotiki različnih svetov, drugi brez drugega ne obstaja, četudi vsak zase biva v lastni tišini.

Naše bližine so vedno navidezne, med njimi je vedno tanka ločnica, ki spremeni podobo v obe smeri. V širokih prostorih samote je prostor za dihanje. Vdih in izdih nosita v sebi vso našo prisotnost in hkrati zavedanje odsotnosti kot nenavzočnosti in hrepenenja. Z drugimi delimo samo odseve svetlob mimobežnega sveta in jih prevajamo v nova sozvočja. Slišimo jih vsak drugače, kadar smo jih sploh pripravljeni zaznati. Ampak ko jih, je vredno vsega, kar je kdaj imelo biti.

Preprosto povedano: prostorskih postavitev se lotevam zato, ker v njih diham. Ustvarjalni proces je najlepši. Takrat si kreator, si bralec v stene zapisanih zgodb prejšnjega časa, iskalec v čas zapisanih sledi, sanjalec občutkov in pesmi, tkalec novih zgodb, skladatelj, ki dele združuje v orkestrirano celoto ...

Ko se vrata odpro, se posloviš, občutek ni več samo tvoj, izročil si ga drugim ... Ko predam izdelek publiki, sem že v naslednji zgodbi, ta ni več samo moja ...



TP: When velvet black appears in my work, it is the earthly counterweight to the ethereal white. It is bounded and defined. A caressing embrace.

On the rare occasion when installations feature both, the black and the white, it is particularly because of the weight and light they carry.

My plans? I am aware of the power and space for a new breath. I will definitely continue and evolve. Come autumn, I am going to attend a two and a half-month-long residency programme in the Glass Museum in France and I am very happy to be able to realise my next major project there.

NI: The installation features a group of *Breaths*. Why a group, why are there a number of them? Judging from the exhibition, you narrate your thoughts and experience through spatial installations. What does that mean to you? And what happens when the exhibition opens to the public?

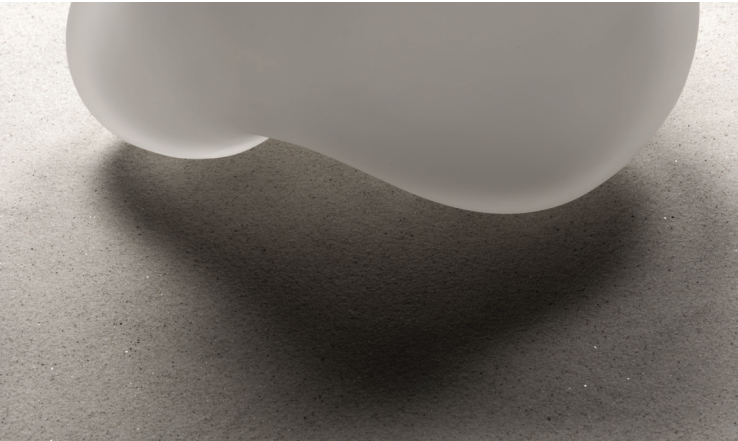
TP: Every person lives inside the veil of their own transient, intimate world. In our encounters we touch other worlds, so one cannot exist without the other, even when one lives in one's own silence.

Our closeness is always virtual, as there is always a thin line in between that transforms the image both ways. Broad spaces of solitude contain room for breathing. Inhalation and exhalation encompass our entire presence and, at the same time, awareness of absence in the sense of non-presence and yearning. All we share with others are reflections of light left on the other side of our transient worlds, translated into new harmonies. We each hear them differently, when prepared to perceive them at all. But once perceived they are valued for all there ever could be.

To put it simply: I do installations because they allow me to breathe. I enjoy the creative process the most. You are a creator, a reader of stories from long lost times, written on the wall, a seeker of traces in time, a dreamer of sensations and poems, weaving a new story, composing an orchestra composition, all at once ...

When the doors open, you say goodbye, the sensation is no longer yours alone, you have given it to others ... When I give my work to the public, I have already moved on to the next story, the one I am leaving behind is no longer mine.













Tanja Pak je magistrirala na Royal College of Art v Londonu leta 1996, potem ko je diplomirala iz industrijskega oblikovanja na Akademiji za likovno umetnost Univerze v Ljubljani. Tu od leta 2009 vodi smer Steklo in keramika, ki jo je tudi pomagala vzpostaviti. Leta 2014 je bila izvoljena v redno profesorico.

Ustvarjalno se posveča kiparstvu, prostorskim umetniškim postavitvam in oblikovanju uporabnih steklenih predmetov.

Razstavlja po vsem svetu. Med pomembnejšimi skupinskimi razstavami so *45th International Invitational* v Habatat Galleries, Michigan v ZDA, 2017; *International Glass Symposium* Novy Bor na Češkem, 2015; *Glass+A*, Benetke v Italiji, 2014; *Inspired by Nature*, muzej Hempel na Danskem, 2013; *Chroma Culture* v Bullseye Gallery v Portlandu v ZDA, 2013; *Glass in Context*, 2012 in 2008, na Danskem; *LuxEuropae2002* v Kopenhagenu na Danskem. V dialogu z arhitekturo Ljubljanskega gradu je ustvarila najizrazitejše samostojne razstave *Znotraj* in *Pointé*, 2012, *Odsanjanja* in *Hip zatem – Alina*, 2011, ter tudi *Šepetanja*, 1998.

Predava na mednarodnih konferencah oblikovanja in umetnosti v steklu.

Njena dela so objavljena v mednarodnih publikacijah in so del javnih in zasebnih zbirk.

Nagrajena je bila s številnimi mednarodnimi rezidencami, med drugimi tudi v Corning Museum of Glass, Creative Glass Center of America, Bullseye R&Education Center in v Pilchuck Glass School v ZDA, ter Cill Rialaigh na Irskem in Musee du Verre v Franciji.

Za svoje delo je prejela Red Dot Honourable Mention Award v letih 2008 in 2009, bila je oblikovalka leta 2011 v Sloveniji, njena dela so bila že štirikrat uvrščena v izbor 100 najpomembnejših del v steklu po izboru žirije The New Glass Review, Corning Museum of Glass.

Ustvarja v svojem studiu v središču Ljubljane in v ateljeju v prenovljeni Švicariji v Tivoliju.

biografija
biography

Tanja Pak achieved a master's degree at the Royal College of Art (Glass and Ceramics) in London in 1996, having graduated in industrial design from the Academy of Fine Art of the University of Ljubljana in 1994. She developed and implemented the new Applied Arts / Glass and Ceramics course to the University in 2009. She has served as head of the department since 2009. In 2014 she was promoted to full professor.

She is creatively committed to sculpture, design of functional glass objects and artistic spatial installations.

Her artwork is exhibited all over the world. More important group exhibitions include *45th International Invitational* at Habatat Galleries, Michigan, USA, 2017; *International Glass Symposium* Novy Bor, Czech Republic, 2015; *Glass+A* in Venice, Italy, 2014; *Inspired by Nature*, Hempel Museum in Denmark, 2013; *Chroma Culture* at Bullseye Gallery in Portland, USA, 2013; *Glass in Context*, Denmark, 2012 and 2008; *LuxEuropae2002* in Copenhagen, Denmark. She created her most distinctive independent exhibitions, *Within* and *Pointé*, 2012, *Dreaming Away* and *A Moment After – Alina*, 2011 and *Whisperings*, 1998 in dialogue with the architecture of Ljubljana Castle.

She lectures at international conferences of art and design in glass.

Her works were published in international publications and are held in public and private collections.

Her fellowships and residencies include Corning Museum of Glass, Creative Glass Center of America, Bullseye R&E Center and Pilchuck Glass School in USA, Cill Rialaigh in Ireland and Musee du Verre in France.

In both 2008 and 2009 she received the Red Dot Design Honorable Mention Award. In 2011 she received the Design of the Year Award in Slovenia. Her works have been included in the selection of 100 most important works in glass according to the jury of The New Glass Review, the Corning Museum of Glass for four times already.

She creates in her studio in the center of Ljubljana and in the studio in the renovated Švicarija in Tivoli.

Razstava Tanja Pak – meddih
Galerija TR3
Ljubljana, 4. junij – 12. oktober 2018

Exhibition Tanja Pak – breath in between
TR3 Gallery
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