

In his Essay, "On the Puppet-Theatre", HEINRICH VON KLEIST accounted for the perfection of the marionette and its superiority over the human body with the unconscious surrender of its mechanism to gravity. Pomona Zipser assembles found pieces of wood to create polynomial sculptures which – in a shadowy, skeleton-like way – are reminiscent of the figurative. But it is a case of „contra-figures“, created solely according to the principles of statics – all the more so, since the individual limbs are not worked or shaped in any way. Pomona Zipser adopts the shapes of the broken bits of wood in her composition just as they are found. The unfinished, rough modelé of the bronzes, made in the lost-wax process, retains the amorphous, unformed quality of the primary material. The limbs are self-supporting, and counterbalanced by simple, unsophisticated, improvised articulated joints; coarse nailing or screwing of wood, fixing with wires, binding and stabilizing with laces. Their bold balance produces neither compact, finished contours nor volume, it neither develops nor encloses its own aesthetic space. Just as the burred water-colour drawings of Pomona Zipser, composed of chance forms lacking in inner differentiation, resemble shadow pictures, so the sculptures with their wooden surfaces and linear braces and stays appear reduced in substance. They express themselves by largely two dimensional means, far from seizing three dimensional space. Their elongated forms, extending to all sides, make awkward, brittle gestures in space, filling it with installations, even environments. A pedestal is certainly dispensable, a sculpture may even hang freely from the ceiling like a huge insect.

The sculptures – with their anthropomorphous verticality or their assembly on the same plane – suggest the figurative, although the impression is unfounded in detail. They can be distantly recognized, but without concessions to true similarity. Indeed, Pomona Zipser's starting points are experiences, episodes and emotions, they are moods and her impressions of people and situations. The nature of her subjects is mostly elementary-existential or mythological-poetical. Zipser develops their specific expressions before she commits them to wood. The way of handling this material is contrary to objective representation; the forms she finds are left unchanged and combined according to static rather than anatomical necessity. She respects the laws laid down by the material itself, which resists mimetic application, and also abstraction – as a comparison with OSKAR SCHLEMMER's "Rod-Dance" (1928) shows, in which wooden rods attached to the body of the dancer as "extensions to the tools of movement" abstract the anatomy, creating a geometry of motion.

It is symptomatic that even those drawings which study the appearance of the sculptures leave open the spatial construction, although in doing so, they appear like projections of three dimensional bodies. In her drawings, in contrast to the composition of the sculptures, Pomona Zipser is more able to surrender to the dynamics of the process, disregarding external requirements (like statics). Sometimes the background is a literary subject, sometimes chance forms alone stimulate the artist to an objective idea. She gives the concrete form in a vague way, without specific, detailed intentions, repeatedly distracted and inspired by

the independent course of the ink in lines and blots, from which she constructs a kind of jointed mechanism which preserves distance to the representative subject.

The fact that the sculptures are constructed and connected according to laws of their own qualifies, objectifies and generalizes the artist's emotional themes. At the same time, their ungainly, expansive forms lead to a grotesque exaggeration of expressive gesture. The emotional tone of the original experience thus returns, transformed, detached from its overwhelming immediacy. To subject the idea to such mutation seems to indicate scepticism. Its permeation with a rationality alien to it and its transfer into non-symbolic signs creates distance, enabling a new perspective on and evaluation of the expressive phenomenon. ERNST LUDWIG KIRCHNER (under the pseudonym MARSALLE) described the new ant-naturalistic form of our inner picture of the visible world as her hieroglyph and attributed to it a more vivid effect than that of naturalistic reproduction. Pomona Zipser is not concerned with increasing, but with objectifying the subjective experience, not with a relapse into, but with emancipation from the immediate overwhelming experience. Only indirectly, though art and its governing laws, does immediate reality lose its superior power, and a glimmer of freedom becomes visible.

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