Artist: PIOTR SKIBA

Title: Murmur over the body lobe

Date: 14 Nov -30 Dec 2020

Venue: SPAZIO ORR, Brescia, Italy

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The rain has stopped. The waterfall will roar like that all

night. I have come out to take a walk and feed. My body--foot,

that is--is wet and cold and covered with sharp gravel. It is

white, the size of a dinner plate. I have set myself a goal, a

certain rock, but it may well be dawn before I get there.

Although I move ghostlike and my floating edges barely graze

the ground, I am heavy, heavy, heavy. My white muscles are

already tired. I give the impression of mysterious ease, but it is

only with the greatest effort of my will that I can rise above the

smallest stones and sticks. And I must not let myself be dis-

tracted by those rough spears of grass. Don't touch them. Draw

back. Withdrawal is always best.

The rain has stopped. The waterfall makes such a noise! (And

what if I fall over it?) The mountains of black rock give off such

clouds of steam! Shiny streamers are hanging down their sides.

When this occurs, we have a saying that the Snail Gods have

come down in haste. I could never descend such steep escarp-

ments, much less dream of climbing them.

That toad was too big, too, like me. His eyes beseeched my

love. Our proportions horrify our neighbors.

Rest a minute; relax. Flattened to the ground, my body is like

a pallid, decomposing leaf. What's that tapping on my shell?

Nothing. Let's go on.

My sides move in rhythmic waves, just off the ground, from

front to back, the wake of a ship, wax-white water, or a slowly

melting floe. I am cold, cold, cold as ice. My blind, white bull's

head was a Cretan scare-head; degenerate, my four horns that

can't attack. The sides of my mouth are now my hands. They

press the earth and suck it hard. Ah, but I know my shell is

beautiful, and high, and glazed, and shining. I know it well,

although I have not seen it. Its curled white lip is of the finest

enamel. Inside, it is as smooth as silk, and I, I fill it to perfection.

My wide wake shines, now it is growing dark. I leave a lovely

opalescent ribbon: I know this.

But O! I am too big. I feel it. Pity me.

If and when I reach the rock, I shall go into a certain crack

there for the night. The waterfall below will vibrate through

my shell and body all night long. In that steady pulsing I can

rest. All night I shall be like a sleeping ear.

Giant Snail,

Elizabeth Bishop

Piotr Skiba in his work clearly underlines the physical presence of things and people, putting everything on the same level. In his works stands out a value connected to the square of the Kosmonautów residential complex, where he lived and worked for years.

His attention is focused on the potential of "lowest rank" disposables. Skiba uses mass-produced objects, parts and materials related to basic, universal human needs. Things such as steel filters, abandoned clothes, broken light bulbs, lighters are often combined in bronze and aluminium castings with organic forms, e.g. with insects, cuticles, nails or KFC wings. The artist lives with them in his apartment, changing, dismantling or assembling into prototype elements, creating sculptural hybrids of neighbourhood monuments. Piotr Skiba's objects seem to evoke a world where things have taken control, where the human body has only left traces. Similar to Nick Flynn's poem "Statuary" (Sculptural) - he works like a bee struggling with the body of a snail or mouse poisoned in a hive. Acting methodically, the artist struggles with the object - "the body", to finally expel it or dismantle it in order to, as Flynn described it poetically, "hermetically close it in a propolis and wax tomb above the city's ordinary monuments." Skiba's archaeological excavations describe a man who tries to oppose nature and fails, leaving a feeling of emptiness and melancholy.