

LA PETITE MORT

The purpose of this project is to explore **borderline states** of mind. This implies stepping up into the realms behind the borders that only the mind can tread, where (and when) the body, suppressed or forgotten, no longer exists while the mind freely roams the transcendental spheres. It is also stepping up into the realms inaccessible to the mind and governed by the body because the body has its own nature, memories and rules that are not those of the mind. In other words, the project implies exploration of the spiritual, oneiric, sexual and carnal. The explorations of the borderline states of the mind (and body) are also explorations of the borderline states of art itself (the end of art or its "little deaths" in the orgasms of its many climaxes), and of all the possible borders and ends (that are not real ends), such as the end of mankind or the end of history.

Key words: orgasm, ecstasy, dream, mind, body, trance... Key notion: BORDER...

The expression *La petite mort* (the little death) has multiple meanings and allows multiple interpretations:

- It can refer to sexual fulfilment and climax (orgasm, little death). According to certain philosophical and theosophical teachings, from Gnosticism to some orthodox sects and mystic movements, Buddhism and tantric yoga - the orgasm is a sublime act when, for a moment, we are freed from the corporeal and our spirits dance over our bodies. It is this brief sojourn of the spirit in the transcendental and intelligible realm that causes orgasmic pleasure (**Shqipe Mehmeti, Ines Efremova**).
- It can refer to the post-coital melancholy, the sense of emptiness and disappearance or the "cooling" of eroticism (the death of Eros).

Art is no longer expected to deal with human sexuality in an explicit way - in this pornographed world of ours, sexuality is ubiquitous and pervades popular culture and media, offering much more explicit sexuality than art itself. In this completely pornographed reality, art has lost its desire for illusion in favour of rising above the aesthetics of the banal and becoming trans-aesthetic.

Hence, the artists' attention has turned towards the phenomena of eroticizing and pornification of the world (and thereby the art), at the same time putting an end to the art as an artistic re-presentation and de-construction of its own subject in favour of a trans-aesthetic and trans-sexual obscenity - obscenity of the visible and all-too-transparent (**Miroslava Trujkanović, Jana Jakimovska**).

- The death of Eros as a contemporary development reveals the dark side of our sexuality and the direct connection of sex to death itself, posing an unpleasant question: What happens when a person gives up transcendence and limits their world to the mere phenomenal (material, corporeal) aspect of their own existence? Are then, in the darkness of the matter, created demons with our own images?

Artists, in their works today, have no other choice but to explore the more profound truths about the world and art instead of superficially presenting sexuality and the sexual act (**Jasminka Novkovska**).

- La petite mort can signify exploration into the realms of dream and the depths of the unconscious (Irena Paskali, Biljana Vasileva, Petra Jovanovska). Dream is a kind of daily death (little death). La petite mort refers to the exploration of the conditions when the mind is asleep and the body dreams; when the mind falls into oblivion and is passive, while the body thinks and is active. Somnambulists and animals lack consciousness, but their bodies are active.
- Oneiric explorations of the dark depths of the person's unconscious inconspicuously lead to the collective unconscious (the bottom layer of the mind is a whole world, according to Jung) and break into the illuminated realms of consciousness. (**Zlatko Gligorov**).
- When the body is turned off and the mind experiences orgasmic freedom in the sexual act, it is a state of trance, psychodelia, phantasmagoria and hallucination. The state of trance (when the body sleeps and the mind is woken up) can be achieved through meditation or an unmediated insight into the transcendental sphere. These are liminal states when our mind freely roams astonishing transcendental landscapes (**Boris Petrovski, Tatjana Maneva, Tatjana Miljovska...**).
- When the mind steps beyond the body (temporary leaving the body), it often means facing oneself and meeting one's own doppelganger (**Žarko Bašeski, Tanja Balać...**) Meeting one's doppelganger also means facing death itself and facing death is an act of eroticism (**Dijana Bogdanovska**).
- The expression Le petite mort can be understood as "little death" of history, end of history, an end which is not an end, a false end, or an end to the idea of the man as we know it and its transformation into a more sophisticated form of existence by means of technology and cybernetics (connecting human body with technology), or regression to the level of animalisation (upgrading or purification of the man to a form that is "natural").

From the vantage point of biology, genetics and cybernetics, we are all mutants, says Baudrillard. In the post modern age, human (natural) body seems to be disappearing and what we experience as body is just a fantastic simulacrum of the corporeal rhetoric or phantom offspring of the sexual intercourse between the body and technology (**Milan Andov**). The idea of the metamorphosis of the body, incorporeality, disgust with the human body (body horror), or the reduction of the body to a simulacrum, comes from the profound change in the understanding of reproduction which determines us as people - human creativity and procreation - as a completely material process, defined by codes. Abandoning the idea of the man as man is an introduction into his "little death" as a technological orgasm or into the nightmare of the human kind (**Robert Dandarov, Atanas Botev...**). Hence the visions of the "end": post-human, post-gender, post-industrial, post-natural, post-artistic, post-geological, post-historic...

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