



Dijana Iva Sesartić

All I know about women

Warmth of the south

Dijana Iva Sesartić

Fritzi Gallery, March 26 - April 20, 2019

With her sculpting skills and enthusiasm for research, the academic artist Dijana Iva Sesartić has been enriching the Croatian art scene for more than twenty years; her work consists of traditional sculptures whose freedom is manifested in bold detachments, post modernistic echoes and a very contemporary visual language. The aesthetic value of the content and style of the exhibition at the Fritzi Gallery is based on the essence of author's sensitivity interwoven in continuous creative work. As one of the few female sculptors, D. I. Sesartić built her valuable and persistent work with individual artistic credo that led her to powerful artistic achievements whose origin she found in historical, artistic and religious iconographic interpretation. In music, dance or film she discovered rich worlds that made her create new, intuitive and different visions. She is a great sculptor who directs her strength to struggle for an adequate positioning of sculpture, for authors whose devoted and often painstaking work is not being valued and affirmed in a dignified way. Through very distinctive and unique artistic expression, the artist has become known to the public for the themes of human figure modelled in plaster or clay, cast bronze sculptures and installations created by using galvanized aluminium wire. In professional and wider public, Sesartić has been praised for her works in which she forms beautiful synergy between man and nature, creating over one hundred and twenty meticulous portraits, many public monuments throughout Croatia and abroad - in Rome, Austria (Celindof) and Slovenia, as also works presenting sacred themes.

The poetics of sculptures by Dijana Iva Sesartić, embedded in figurative concepts, emerged from a classical expression in which realism and stylization are intertwined. Inspired by the beauty and inner strength of a woman, the author skilfully articulates the curved lines of the nude body as a part of nature itself, meditating on the position and roles of women as mothers, workers or creators. Self-conscious, sensual and free, like the artist, they are fighters and symbols of the strength of women. The history of art has long been preoccupied with the arabesques of female figures in the interpretative thoughts and actions of many artists. Applying modelling technique, the author creates gentle, fragile and dreamy nudes with subtle erotic vibrancy. The figure of a woman, though contemporary, is intoned with archetypal, mythic and iconic features, in dualism of divine and human. Unsmoothed tactile surfaces, round rhythmic forms of playful volume, without redundant narratives, have been articulated directly, such as Aphrodite (from Greek aphros - foam), the goddess of love and lust, born in swirling creative thought. Sensual

and melancholic, in the meditative turmoil of their aspirations, they reveal the hidden meanings on which lies the primacy of skilfully modelled proportions. In the metamorphosis of the body as the temple of love, the sculptor takes the aura of the sublime and the new life from a pregnant woman. By the personification of Venus, the Roman goddess of beauty and love, Sesartić creates reminiscence of the mythical realia represented by prehistoric figurines with attributes of fertility in magical references. Covered with a veil of their own experiences, just like the statues of Donna Velata¹, sensual female figure are inexhaustible source of author's living creations. Immaterial in front of ephemeral, secular and real.

Perceptual moments, depending on the angle of view, light and shadow, complement the experience of expressive sculptures - reception of work and connotative levels are in the knowledge, experience and sensibility of the beholder. The antique philosophy of art opened the question of whether the perception occurs in our senses, mind or in our soul; what is beauty - idea, goodness, or consistency with the proportions of the cosmos, the human body, rules and laws; is the art of depiction an imitation, re-creation, eurythmy - rhythm order, movement ... Many of the interpretations in art of that time are still present. Beauty is subjective, spiritual, inner matter. The external and sensory is only the reflex of the internal segment on which it is based. The sculptor Dijana Iva Sesartić builds the idea on rich antique models and skills on the foundations of tradition, offering the detachment from contemporary interpretation and visualization of emotion. Using a wide range of materials and techniques which differ in processing plastic and surface treatment, such as gypsum, bronze, galvanized wire,



¹ Sculptures with the theme of the allegorical representations of the Faith with a veil hiding her face. Transparent anti-curing veil becomes a frequent motif in the sophisticated visual culture of Venice in Settecento (the 1700s) when the sculptor A. Corradini (Venice, 1688 - Naples, 1752) introduced it as a new trend in sculpture. Face partially covered with a veil, signifying purity, hidden beauty and spiritual life, has been present in the Mediterranean cultural circle since ancient times.

stone, wood, assemblage or relief, the author fills the space with harmonious works of art that speak in silence.

By mixing divergent forms of art, the artist opens up to new spaces of sculpture and painting, referring to the stylistic realizations of European sculpture of the second half of the 19th and the first half of the 20th century, i.e. to prominent protagonists such as A. Rodin, A. Maillol, G. Minne, H. Arp, H. Moore and others or, no less important, to the legacy of our country and masters such as I. Meštrović, F. Kršinić, A. Augustinčić... In the text "Sculpture in the service of the sacred" Sesartić states: "With a great suggestive power, sculpture carries the drama of human life in itself, perhaps more than other art forms. When the sculptor, by the power of modelling, the relationship between mass and surface and the rhythm of volume, achieves the inner structure of reality, he inevitably feels the pleasure of the spirit. This is a moment that is so raw and true. The moment when, apart from the desire to make the invisible visible and to materialize the timeless in the ephemeral, everything takes an unexpected turn. This is the moment when the work of art goes beyond the sculptor or artist and begins to lead an independent life of its own!"² Complex and multidimensional lines, as metaphors for thought processes, formed swirling dance-driven, defined bodies bursting with energy and growth. These are objects created with galvanized aluminium wire that appear as spatial drawings in the material. Dematerialization of the wire which is no longer just a manipulative matter, but a softly rounded female body whose movement strives to freedom. Restlessness and anxiety at one point, elegance and enthusiasm in the other. Constructively, the objects are multifaceted and highly transformative in their dynamic expansion into space. The perforated structure of the metal net becomes almost relief composition suitable for the play of shadows, the game whose rules have been determined by light and movement of the beholder. The modified sculpture, somewhat abstract, comes out of the given frameworks in search of different expressive possibilities. Duality of the sculptural object on the wall represents a research approach and way of thinking about contemporary sculpture not only in visual space but also in mind. The art critic A. Filipić, on the occasion of the author's exhibition of wire installations entitled *Pred(f)okus*, held at the Kula Gallery in Split in 2006, wrote the following remarkable words: "If your habit leads you to try to recognize this spiritual assembly or installation with your mind, you will not make a mistake. However, if you move your reception centre closer to your heart, your 'catch' will be more abundant and your experience will be more complete."

² Sesartić, D. I., (2006) Sculpture in the service of the sacred. In: *The Service of God - liturgical and pastoral journal*, Vol. 46, No. 1. Available at: https://hrcak.srce.hr/index.php?show=clanak&id_clanak_jezik=136814

Contemporary sculpture has resorted to the traps of visual culture in conceptual spinning wheels where the skills of modelling, carving, volume design and play with space has been lost. The idea and freedom of interpretation in the nature of contemporary production is quite legitimate and desirable, but the primary value of sculptural aesthetics is not an illusion of the past. The modernity of anthropomorphic design is a real experience for Dijana Iva Sesartić. Personal introspections emerge from aesthetics that is intrinsic to the work of art. It is the play of metalanguage that is not only rationally observable but also emotionally recognizable. It is recognizable in the volume of movement stopped at the moment of freedom that lasts forever.



Bather I, 2009, bronze, 18 x 21 x 23 cm



Game with a child, 2016, impregnated gypsum, plants, wax, 81 x 38 x 27 cm



Escape, 2013, impregnated alabaster, paraffin wax, 95 x 59 x 43 cm



Jobica, 2013, impregnated gypsum, paraffin wax,
50 x 37 x 27 cm



Bather II, 2009, bronze,
29.7 x 18 x 21 cm



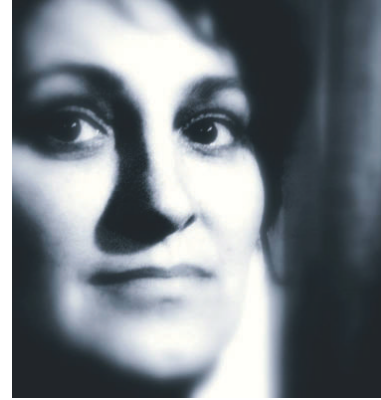
Hidden, 2013., impregnated gypsum, paraffin wax,
39 x 30 x 28 cm



Citura, 2015., aluminijška mreža,
47 x Ø x 50 cm

BIOGRAPHY

Dijana Iva Sesartić was born in Zagreb in 1966 where she finished elementary and high school. She studied at the art academies in Sarajevo, Prague and Zagreb. She graduated in Sculpture from the Academy of Fine Arts in Zagreb in the class of Professor Stanko Jančić. She made study visits to Stuttgart, Rome and Florence. D. I. Sesartić is the author of a series of sculptures in public spaces, some of them in Split and the surrounding area; Woman with fish - Sućuraj on the island of Hvar; Angel Raphael - Vranjic near Solin; St. Domnius - Ethnographic Museum, Split; St. Liberan - Church in Mejaši (Split); St. Nicholas - Sućuraj on the island of Hvar; bust of Marko Marulić - Archbishopric Seminary, Split; plaque Fabjan Kaliterna - Split Sports Museum; portal of the Church of Our Lady of Lourdes - Bijeli Vir; bust of the Archbishop Frane Franić - Domus Croata Ivan Mertz, Rome; Sculpture of Our Lady of Martyrs - the Church of Solin Martyrs in Solin, etc. She has held solo exhibitions for more than twenty years and has participated in numerous domestic and international, group, thematic and juried exhibitions, art colonies, sculpture symposiums and art festivals. She is the initiator and co-founder of the biennial exhibition of the Salon of Contemporary Sacred Art - IVO DULČIĆ in Split. D. I. Sesartić is the 1st prize winner of the 3rd Croatian Triennial Exhibition of Self-Portraits "Identities", Prica Gallery, Samobor 2014. She has been a member of HDLU (Croatian Association of Artists) Zagreb since 1996, a member of HULU (Croatian Association of Visual Artists) Split since 1998, a member of Matica Hrvatska (Matrix Croatica) since 2009 and HZSU (Croatian Freelance Artists Association) since 2011. She lives and works in Solin.



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Front page: **Minerva**, impregnated gypsum, paraffin wax, 71 x 53 x 51 cm

Last page: **Venus**, impregnated gypsum, paraffin wax, 67 x 23 x 26 cm

