

Fellow-traveller on the Way to the Dream

Kyriakos Katzourakis undoubtedly represents one of the most important chapters in art; I, however, will endeavour to record some of the footprints from the journey he led us on with his eyes, his love, his soul and his disposition!

Kyriakos is present in all dreamy saunterings on the quest for a spacetime that is free. A utopian escapade, just like "Hyrmina's dream in Athens." His female figure in blue unexpectedly moving away, but always being present to consign the possibility of victory.

One night we dared suggest to him the idea of our self-negation, in order to redefine ourselves, on the pretext of the preparation of a new medicine; our "madness" was dictated by the desire and the passion for the new. We visited Kyriakos in his studio and talked to him just before the remedy was turned into a commercial product... We didn't have to say much. His sparkling eyes, the fire in his soul, his pulsating amorous spirit betrayed his agreement with the plan, even before he had said anything. "I will create an art box, I will throw it to the commercial piranhas, I will assuage the overwhelming passions, I will enchant through sound, light and colour, I will engage the covetous tensions, I will impart the triumph of health against sickness everywhere." "I will paint Katia's victory with the spear against the evil sickness." He painted without canvas or brushes and he took us on a journey farther, higher and deeper than what we had imagined. I know not in how many minds this white-clad figure was imprinted, the one that looks at the sky debating the horrible imbalance of the cry's scarlet blood; the power of this endeavour, however, was etched as a storm of subversion on those who can hope that the "barefoot battalions" will someday come across their own personal "Shangri-La."

His "couple" misleads, entices and entraps the unsuspecting spectator, sometimes in "Foucault's studio," other times in the "art box," other times still in the "healing room," always, however, urging fellow-travellers to set up and dismantle the parts of heavy tableaux...

In 1989, at the World Congress of Psychiatry, its president, professor K. Stefanis, had the idea to honour his guests, important professors of Psychiatry with worldwide prestige, by offering them engraved paintings. Kyriakos Katzourakis painted three themes: "Oedipus," "Narcissus" and "Eros and Psyche." The limited copies of these works of his look squarely in the eye thousands of patients who visit their doctors' surgeries and I want to believe that they sometimes embrace the unconfessed questions they want to pose on their inner Sphinx.

Katzourakis is a "healer" because the magnitude of his work, the range of his expressions and the depth of his quests is in accord with those persecuted worldwide. "What concerns me the most is a person who is not allowed to walk" (N. Hikmet). He penetrates the small, grim, populous rooms of the cramped souls patting them on the back like an angel while holding in his other hand the paintbrush, aiming towards the light! Through the blinds, through the broken glass partitions, through the cracks on the ceiling, through the bare light bulb, through the eyes of the loved one, awakens in us the possibility of a glimmer, the "adventure of painting..."

I look at the front page of "Anti," of November 25, 1994; "Kemal, who drank the black milk that morning" is having his last meal, behind him the electric chair awaits. "When I see glamour entering our field, when art self-complacently adorns our city, I think: what am I doing?" he said while interviewed by Nias Kanellis, and his Templo comes alive and moves in time in every place, in order to cover that which has been destroyed "with fire and knife," the belief in man's righteousness. The faces of the Templo reflect the pain in their souls, in their testimonies.

The chancel screen (templo) of the modern church.

Who seeks the other, who calls, hear.

They haven't tamed the beast, do you hear me?

And time is a great church, do you hear me?

(O. Elytis)

Humble, Emotional, Intelligent, Intuitive, Leftist... with these colours he stands beside every helpless, persecuted, wronged fellow man of his...

This is Kyriakos Katzourakis's "Way to the West" and I consider myself especially lucky that he shared with me fragments of his journey toward the dream. Because, possibly without realizing it, Kyriakos turned into a panoramic view of life the small window that my priest father had opened for me, collecting prints of paintings in magazines, calendars, medicine advertisements... of painters such as Da Vinci, Caravaggio, Raphael.

P.S. The journey continues even after the flashback! After all, that August full-moon night at the "sea caves" we consigned Katia's tears, who deposited in the "Kytherian Days" of N. Papagalanis the inexhaustible resources of her soul! A consignment for things to come...

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