

galerija forum

vera josipović

rasponi i dometi

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slike | objekti | 1950.—1977.

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Zagreb, 1950.
gvaš | gouache
54 x 43,3 cm

rasponi i dometi vere josipović

tonko maroević

Zanimljiv i vrijedan opus slikarice Vere Josipović, stjecajem raznih okolnosti, ostao je nedovoljno poznat u našoj sredini, a parcijalno prihvaćen i opravdano cijenjen u Italiji i Švicarskoj, gdje je umjetnica duže vremena živjela i djelovala. Kroz više od pola stoljeća neposustala rada prolazila je različitim morfološkim putanjama i odgovarala sasvim različitim motivskim i problemskim izazovima, da bi se gotovo u svim fazama i ciklusima potvrdila ozbiljnom razinom pristupa i kontinuiranom zaokupljenošću dinamizmom pokreta, pročišćenošću vizije i svježinom reakcije.

Definitivni povratak slikarice u domovinu, nakon dugotrajna izbivanja, nameće nam potrebu i obavezu prezentacije njezinih raspona i dometa, odnosno kritičkog vrednovanja i povjesničarskog uklapanja njezine dionice u kontekst hrvatskog slikarstva druge polovice XX. stoljeća. Do poželjne cjelovitije monografske izložbe, ova izložba, kojom se – nakon više od šezdeset godina – Vera Josipović ponovo samostalno u Zagrebu predstavlja, ima prvenstveno zadatak upozoriti na široku stilsku amplitudu i dosegnute oblikovne rezultate jednog polivalentnog i doista „nomadskog" kretanja kroz život i stvaralaštvo. Ova izložba nužno naglašava velike kontraste između početnih, još postimpresionističkih, viđenja krajolika i gradova i potonjih, recentnijih, sasvim autonomnih kompozicionih i materičkih rješenja, optičkih senzacija i vizualnih izazova.

Naizgled paradoksalno, s obzirom na upravo naznačenu oblikovnu polarizaciju, ova izložba također ima potrebu i obavezu posvjedočiti kako se u opusu Vere Josipović ipak slažu, nadovezuju i uspješno sintetiziraju dionice opusa, što ih je ona prethodno ostvarivala pod imenima Vere Murtić, odnosno Vere Jos. Doista, usprkos naglašenoj dihotomiji motivskih polazišta i korištenih sredstava stanovito jedinstvo nalazimo u težnji za što dinamičnijim artikuliranjem površine, za što slobodnijim tretiranjem kadra kao mjesta sabiranja gestualnih silnica ili fokusiranja raznih tokova svjetlosnog zračenja.

Vera Josipović pripada prvom poratnom naraštaju školovanom na zagrebačkoj Akademiji likovnih umjetnosti. Uz solidnu spremu primljenu od uglednih nastavnika, pokazala je odmah i talent dobroga crtača, neposrednost žive reakcije u animalističkim, portretnim i krajobraznim studijama i zadatcima. Posebno je bila vješta i nadahnuta u predstavljanju bilja i raslinja, u sustavnom diferenciranju listova i granja raznih tipova i vrsta, zapravo u organskom slijeđenju njihova rasta i prostiranja. Premda će se u kasnijim razdobljima uglavnom udaljiti od percipiranja i registriranja konkretnih, „figuralnih" motiva, asimilirana podloga bilježenja realnih poticaja dobro će joj doći i u svladavanju sasvim nemimetičkih prostornih odnosa. Po diplomiranju slikarica je dobila priliku (i povlasticu) da stanovito vrijeme provede u Parizu, gdje se mogla izravnije upoznati s vrhuncima klasičnog i suvremenog, modernog stvaralaštva, a potom i u New Yorku (i u drugim američkim gradovima), gdje se morala suočiti s napastima i izazovima aktualne civilizacije, s neobičnim vizurama i gustim aglomeracijama („šume nebodera") hiperurbanizirane metropole, Metropolisa, središta „vrloga novog svijeta". Vrativši se s toga višemjesečnoga izleta, na samome početku (3. - 15. siječnja) 1953. godine priredila je u zagrebačkom Salonu Likum svoju prvu samostalnu izložbu, na kojoj je pokazala ostvarene rezultate, fiksirane doživljaje i dojmove u uspjeloj seriji pariških i njujorških veduta i prizora.

Već je i dizajn inače nevelikoga kataloga izložbe Vere Murtić (sa samo jednom reprodukcijom: „Place de la Concorde") imao značenje stanovitog programa, ako ne radikalnog avangardizma a ono svakako prodora u modernije, smjelije, izazovnije. Ortogonalna geometrijska kompozicija elemenata, naglašenih crnih traka i ploha strukturiranih nizovima paralelnih linija, bila je pojačana poigravanjem različitim tipovima i veličinama slova i brojeva, takoreći u duhu bliskom gotovo istodobnim exatovskim traženjima. Dok je još bila djelatna (makar i na izmaku) socrealistička doktrina i, njoj komplementarna, kulturna zatvorenost i duhovna izolacija, posebno od zapadnoeuropskih, „dekadentnih" izvora, javni start Vere Murtić morao je djelovati kao nedvojbeno osvje-

ženje i privlačiti kao hvatanje koraka sa suvremenijim tokovima (odnosno, barem kao nadoknađivanje zaostataka prouzročenih ratnom i poratnom „cezurom").

Po odlučnosti i manifestnosti (pa – analogno – ni veličinom formata, ni zahtjevnošću tehnike, ni odmicanjem od doslovnosti motiva) prvo predstavljanje naše slikarice ne može imati epohalnu težinu i neskrivenu ambiciju izložbe „Doživljaj Amerike", tadašnjega joj supruga (i suputnika po sjevernoameričkim stazama) Ede Murtića, ali je više nego dobrodošao korelativ (a u tradiciju uronjeniji morfološki „korektiv") odmjeravanja sa žestokim prizorima dotad još „neukroćene ljepote". Vraćajući prvu Verinu izložbu u povijesno pamćenje, raspolažemo sa svega nekoliko sačuvanih veduta (od nekoć izloženih dvadesetak velegradskih motiva), ali smatramo da su sasvim dovoljni da potvrde i značajnu kulturno-povijesnu ulogu i neospornu likovnu kompetentnost i ostvarenost. Verin doživljaj Pariza i Amerike živ je, neposredan; potez joj je lapidaran i kurzivan, a kromatika uglavnom suzdržanija, pastelna; okeri i smeđi tonovi, ljubičaste i crvenkaste partije, žućkasta i bljeđa svjetlost pozadina. Posebno su zanimljiva prostorna rješenja, znalačko razdvajanje planova. U bliskom pogledu naznači se poneki objekt kao reper i orijentir (automobili, prolaznici), u drugom su planu kubično naslagane i kolористički čvršće definirane građevine u gustim sklopovima, da bi iz trećega plana izranjali visoki neboderi, postupno se pretapajući i gubeći u perspektivi obzorja. Bilo da slika Manhattan ili Bronx, Downtown ili Brooklyn, prizori su redovito panoramski široki, a akvarelom i gvašem usklađeni u znalačkim preljevima. Čini nam se da je slikarica ipak iz rada u rad pojačavala svoju emotivnu, temperamentnu participaciju, tako da je u najzrelijim rezultatima došla do opuštenijega duktusa i slobodnijega otiska mrlje kao znaka intimno usvojenoga viđenja.

Nakon prve samostalne izložbe Vera Josipović još je nekoliko godina agilno djelovala u našoj sredini. Samostalno je izlagala u Rijeci i Borovu, Osijeku (zajedno s Edom Murtićem) i Titogradu, a javljala se i na nizu kolektivnih izložaba. U nedostatnoj nam dokumentaciji moramo akcentirati katalog ULUH-ove izložbe u Beogradu 1954. godine, u kojemu je reproduciran njezin „Portret", no zapravo slika već vrlo radikalne redukcije, sasvim na pragu apstrahiranja i mimo ikakva dugovanja sličnosti, fizionomiji, karakterizaciji ili bilo kojim vanlikovnim zahtjevima. Da se provjeri i dokaže, već 1958. godine izlaže u prestižnoj milanskoj galeriji Bergamini, što joj je moglo uvećati samosvijest i dovesti potom do odluke da radno odseli u novi, talijanski kulturni ambijent.

Šezdesete godine svakako su bile razdoblje novih okušavanja i stilskih mijena. Slika „Obluci" (1963) govori o biomorfnoj, organičkoj stilizaciji, a još više o enformelnoj, materičkoj razradi gustih slojeva purpurnog i rujnog pigmenta. Slika „Jarboli", s druge strane, svjedoči nastojanja strože strukturalne organizacije kadra, geometriziranih, pravokutnih pojaseva i parcela, tretiranih pak lazurno u živim kontrastima i pretapanjima pretežno otvorene game. Gotovo konstruktivistička matrica rezultat je dokidanja mimetičkih, referencijalnih faktora: u prvoj verziji (1964-5) prepoznavali su se obrisi brodova i morska površina, da bi u definitivnoj, pročišćenoj slici ostala samo skeletna mreža naglašenih vertikala.

Izložbom u Galeriji Pater 1964. u Milanu započinje slikaričina dugačka radna talijanska faza ili epizoda, svakako pod skraćenim prezimenom Jos (zbog olakšanja izgovora, recepcije). Predgovorom je lijepo dočekuje poštovani kritičar Garibaldo Marussi, koji u njezinim radovima prepoznaje „osunčani svijet, koji pak čuti slanoću, vjetar s pučine i život koji bruji među hridinama", dakle u viđene kadrove upisuje atmosferu sredozemnih polazišta. Možda je još važnija njegova tvrdnja kako se suprotnosti planova međusobno pomiruju, kako se početna neravnoteža, gotovo lom i raskid, konačno usklađuju u svjetlosnoj epifaniji, vode od dramatičnoga prema lirskome. Iste godine slikarica izlaže i u Bergamu, a u katalogu izložbe održane u Kulturnom centru oglašava se također istaknuti kritik Franco Passoni koji naglašava intelektualnu i racionalnu komponentu što se nadograđuje na inače osjetilnu i ekspresivnu podlogu formativnih godina. Svjestan Verine kompleksne radne putanje, prelazi preko domovinskog joj školovanja kao nužnog započinjanja u tradiciji, pariški boravak vidi kao obogaćenje iskustvom impresionističke (i fovističke) svjetlosti, američki izazov tumači kao nužnost suočavanja s nekontroliranim a vitalnim poticajima, dok talijansku inkubaciju vidi kao nužnost jače kontrole nagonskog odnosa prema slikanju i usmjeravanje kreativnosti prema intimnijim i strože racionalnim protegama.

Evidentno je da inozemna kritika insistira na kozmopolitskim svojstvima i vidi slikarstvo Vere Jos u ključu morfološko-civilizacijske sinteze. Dužni smo se pozivati na tuđa svjedočanstva, jer raspolažemo nevelikim brojem uzoraka iz prelaznih faza sredine šez-



Pariz, 1951.
gvaš | gouache
58 x 46 cm



New York, 1951.
gvaš | gouache
53,5 x 43,2 cm

desetih godina. U svakom slučaju riječ je o varijantama sažetog pejzažizma, o konfrontacijama primarnih elemenata (zemlje i vode, mora i neba) s asocijacijama na kraške predjele ili jadranske arhipelage. Preferirajući zračnu perspektivu i ptičju vizuru, povremeno kao da se slikarica približavala strukturama nalik „gromačama" ili suhozidinama, dok je, s druge strane, mogla razbiti i neke tekovine „aeropitture", odnosno futuristički smjelih vizija „odozgo". Potonje usmjerenje prema preplitanju i križanju jakih gestualnih tragova, prema sukobljavanju i lomljenju crtičastih nanosa, svakako će proizlaziti i iz svjesne asimilacije nekih kubo-futurističkih premisa, kao kongenijalnih vlastitoj dinamičnoj i lakoničnoj naravi.

Kroz tridesetak godina intenzivnog talijansko-švicarskog boravka Vera Jos je održala nemali broj dobro primljenih izložaba, te stekla kritički saldo dostojan uvažavanja. Iz njezine pisane recepcije, guste kritičke „fortune", možemo izdvojiti još nekoliko pertinentnih viđenja i ocjena. Giancarlo Pandini, primjerice, primjećuje kako „naturalističke naznake bivaju gotovo stopljene u gustom prostoru, te postaju sve nestvarnije… ali i sve poetičnije zbog zračenja svjetlosti što ih okružuje." Sergio Sangiorgi prepoznaje – u naslovu svojega prikaza – „ravnotežu oblika i motiva", a u samome tekstu posebno izdvaja njezinu „paletu temeljnih boja, jakih tonova, što se ritmički nižu u asimetričnom slijedu." Još dodaje: „Oblici jedva da dodiruju zbilju predmeta i izbijaju mimo mogućnosti uobičajenih opisa, da se potom otvore smjeloj i jamačno novoj dinamici."

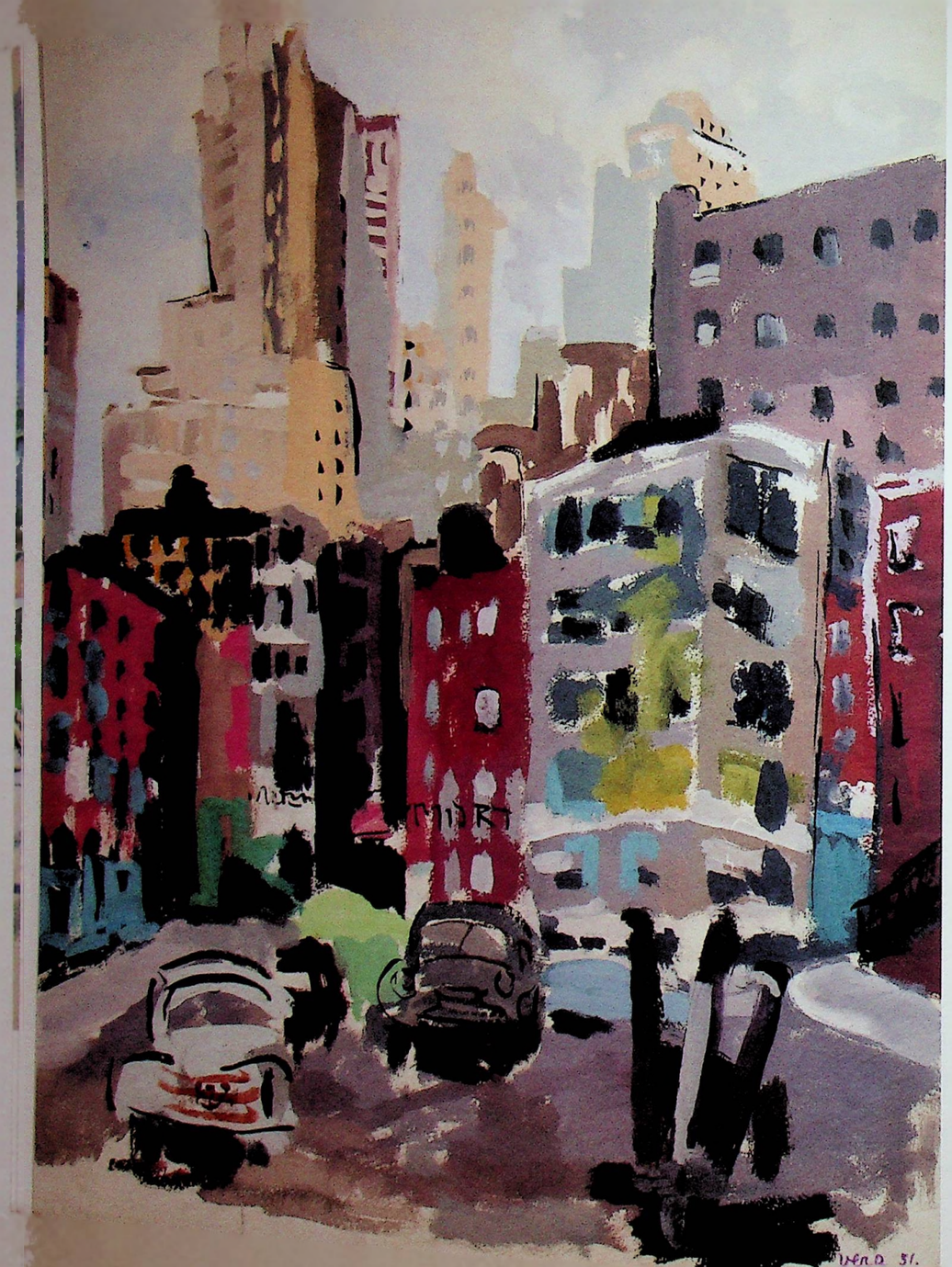
Kritičarka Elda Fezzi u nekoliko je navrata pratila slikaričin rad. Prvom zgodom je apostrofirala činjenicu da su djela Vere Jos „plod energičnog konstruktivnog smisla, podržanoga dobrom tehničkom spremom i kulturom posebno vezanom uz iskustva francuske škole." U drugom je navratu kritičarka prepoznala i pohvalila uvećanu zrelost: „Korištenje oblikovnih i kromatskih elemenata steklo je lakoću, a tkivo platna predstavlja očigledan sklad između ideje i izvedbe. Prodori i usjeci što se šire i prepliću po obrađenom polju više nisu impulzivne i 'gestualne' vibracije nego su praćene u svojoj učestalosti i pročućene u istančanosti suglasja, ostvarenoga najsitnijim varijacijama, gotovo velovima suzbijenih kontrasta."

U razvoju i širenju problemskih krugova Vera Josipović se okušala i u velikim ciklusima na motive granja i čvorova, ili na temu cvjetova, peteljki i latica. Drugonavedeni motivski krug rezultirao je delikatnošću i transparentnošću nanosa, sasvim drugačije palete i tretmana površine nego li u dotadašnjim slikama. Gotovo nalik senzualnoj florealnosti Georgie O'Keefe, velike čaške Vere Jos – u svojim razblaženim žućkastim, ružičastim ili ljubičastim preljevima – ukazuju na zapretanu i suzdržanu emotivnost kao nutarnju rezervu kreativnih potencijala. Slično (makar i sasvim suprotno) mogli bismo kazati i o njezinim radovima na čeličnim pločama, u kojima se delikatnost dodira spreže s odlučnošću izvedbe.

Vera Josipović je imala sklonosti i za okušavanje u primijenjenim zadatcima: ogledala se kao ilustrator i kao dizajner zaštitnih znakova, kao dekorater i kao autor mozaika. Ali pristup obradi čelika ne možemo pripisati primjeni ili narudžbi. Štoviše, do bavljenja čeličnim pločama (da ne kažemo baš: eksperimentiranja) došla je tako što je odbila slikati uljem po metalu, što nije mogla prihvatiti ulogu dekoriranja ponuđenog joj materijala. Osjećala je, naime, da tvarnost čelika emanira vlastitu istinitost, da iz nehrđajućega sjaja može izbiti neočekivane učinke, da ploču može tretirati tako da sama otkrije latentne slojeve i različite razine svjetlosnog zračenja.

Umjesto da slika na čeličnim pločama, slikarica je odlučila izmamiti oblike i odraze iz tih ploča. Njezine brušenjem aktivirane kompozicije, međutim, imaju elemente i ritmička rješenja u velikoj mjeri analogna dinamici ostvarivanoj na platnima. Ali imaju i sasvim drugačiju fakturu; iz drugačije tehnike izbija srodnost s tekovinama strojne civilizacije, odnosno, s poetikama racionalno-konstruktivističkog smjera. Nije neobično što je Ivan Picelj povezivao ta nova slikaričina iskustva sa scijentističkim ili exatovskim usmjerenjima. No dovoljno bi bilo usporediti čelike Vere Jos s, primjerice, aluminijima Getulia Alvianija, pa da vidimo kako sličnosti izvedbenoga postupka ne znače i jedinstvenost estetskog polazišta, jer slikarica ni u obradi metala ne pristaje na mehaničku strogost i puki geometrizam, nego upravo insistira na iluzionističkim prodorima u tkivo, na sugeriranju diferenciranih slojeva i planova, na dinamičnom kontrastiranju glatkih i zasjenjenih parcela, dakle na eminentno slikarskim učincima.

Izložba kojom se slikarica Vera Josipović vraća u domovinu samo je sažetak i torzo njezina djelovanja, spajajući krajnosti početnih svježih figuralnih veduta i zrelih autonomnih kompozicionih rješenja, zaokružujući razvedenu amplitudu od postakademskih plodova do samosvojnih iskoraka u drugačije, novo, neiskušano.



New York, 1951.
gvaš | gouache
57,5 x 46,2 cm

vera josipović: ranges and achievements

tonko maroević

The interesting and very worthwhile oeuvre of the painter Vera Josipović, for various reasons, has remained insufficiently well-known in our milieu, although partially accepted and justly appreciated in Italy and Switzerland, where the artist lived and worked for longish periods of time. During more than half a century of unremitting work she traversed various morphological trajectories and responded to extremely diverse challenges of motif and problem. In almost all phases and series of works she confirmed her reputation with the serious level of her approach and her continued absorption in the dynamism of movement, refinement of vision and freshness of reaction.

The final return of the painter to her homeland, after so many years of absence, imposes on us the need, and the obligation, to present the range of her work and her individual achievements, that is, to undertake a critical evaluation of her work and a historical placing of it in the context of Croatian painting of the second half of the 20th century. Until any more complete monographic exhibition, this show, with which, after more than sixty years, Vera Josipović is once again presenting herself solo in Zagreb, primarily has the task to draw attention to the broad stylistic amplitude and achieved formal results of a polyvalent and nomadic, indeed, movement through life and creative work. This exhibition necessarily accentuates the great contrasts between the initial, still post-Impressionist, views of landscape and cityscapes and the latter, more recent, extremely autonomous compositions and material solutions, optical sensations and visual challenges. At first glance paradoxically, because of the formal polarisation just mentioned, this exhibition also has the need and obligation to testify that parts of the oeuvre that she had previously created under the names of Vera Murtić and then Vera Jos fit into, continue from and are successfully synthesised in the oeuvre of Vera Josipović. Indeed, notwithstanding the conspicuous dichotomy of the generative subjects and the means used, a certain unity can be found in the aspiration for as dynamic as may be an articulation of the surface, for a highly free treatment of the composition as place for the gathering of gestural forces or focussing various flows of luminous radiation.

Vera Josipović belongs to the first post-war generation trained at the Zagreb Academy of Fine Arts. In addition to receiving a sound grounding from her distinguished teachers, she at once showed the talent of a good draughtswoman, the immediacy of spontaneous lively reaction in her animalist, portrait and landscape studies and assignments. She was particularly skilful and inspired in representing plants and vegetation, in the systematic differentiation of leaves and boughs of various types and species, actually, in the organic succession of their growth and extension. Although in later periods she would on the whole grow apart from the perception and registration of concrete figural motifs, the basis of recording real stimuli, already assimilated, would serve her well in the mastering of entirely non-mimetic spatial relationships.

After her graduation, the painter obtained the chance, and the privilege, to spend a certain time in Paris, where she was able to become acquainted with the high points of the classic and the contemporary, of modern work, and then in New York (and other American cities), where she had to face up to the temptations and challenges of up-to-date civilisation, with its uncommon views and dense agglomerations ("forest of skyscrapers") of a the hyper-rurbanized metropole, Metropolis, the centre of "the brave new world". Returning from this several-months-long outing, at the very beginning of 1953 (January 3 to January 15) she had her first solo show, in Zagreb's Likum Salon, where she showed the results achieved, the experiences and impressions caught in a successful series of views and scenes from Paris and New York.

Even the design of the not very large Vera Murtić catalogue (with only one reproduction, that of a painting of the Place de la Concorde) constituted a certain programme, if

not of the radical avant-garde, then certainly of a breakthrough into something more modern, a bolder and more challenging approach. The orthogonal geometrical composition of elements, the emphasised black strips and surfaces structured by sequences of parallel lines was backed up by games with various types and sizes of letters and numbers, as if in a spirit close to the almost simultaneous questing of Exat 51. While the doctrine of socialist realism, however much now on its last legs, was still to an extent effective, together with the complementary culture of isolation, cultural closedness and spiritual isolation, particularly from the Western European sources of "decadence", the public beginning of Vera Murtić had to act as an undoubted refreshment and have appealed as a getting-into-step with contemporary currents (or at least making up for the backlogs caused by the wartime and post-war "caesuras").

In terms of determination and manifestness (and analogically not by size, nor demands of the technique, nor literalness of motif) the first presentation of the painter could not have the epochal weight and unconcealed ambition of the exhibition *Experience of America* by her then American travelling companion and husband Edo Murtić, but it was a more than welcome correlative (a morphological "corrective" steeped in tradition) of the measuring up to the fierce scenes of a previously "untamed beauty". Bringing Vera's first exhibition into historical memory, we have just a few extant views (of the once exhibited twenty big-city motifs), but we think they are completely sufficient to confirm the important cultural and historical role and the incontrovertible visual competence and realisation.

Vera's experience of Paris and America is alive, immediate; her brushstroke is lapidary and cursive, and the chromatics on the whole more restrained and pastel, in ochres and towns of brown, violet and reddish parts, the yellowish, paler, light of the backgrounds. Particularly interesting are the spatial approaches, the cunning separation of planes. In the foreground some object is adumbrated as point of reference and orientation (cars, passers-by). In the middle ground are buildings layered in cubes and in stronger colours, in dense sets, and then out of the background emerge the tall towers, gradually merging into and being lost in the perspective of the horizon. Whether she was painting Manhattan or the Bronx, Downtown or Brooklyn, the scenes would regularly be panoramically broad, adjusted in skilful tints of watercolour and gouache. It seems to us that the painter nevertheless, work after work, stepped up the participation of her temperament and emotions, so that in the most mature results she arrived at a more relaxed hand and a freer impression of the blotch as sign of an intimately interiorised vision.

After her first solo exhibition, Vera Josipović was still busily at work in the country. She had solo shows in Rijeka and Borovo, in Osijek with Edo Murtić, and in Titograd, and also appeared in a series of collective shows. For want of adequate information, we have to lay stress on the ULUH catalogue for an exhibition in Belgrade in 1954, in which her *Portrait* is reduced; actually, this is a painting of what is by now extremely radical reduction, right there on the threshold of abstraction, and without any debts to likeness, physiognomy, characterisation or any other kind of extra-artistic requirements. To test and prove herself, in 1958 she exhibited at the prestigious Bergamini Gallery in Milan, which must have increased her self-confidence and led to the decision to move very early on to the new Italian cultural setting.

The sixties were certainly a period of new trials, of stylistic modifications. The painting *Cobbles* of 1963 tells of a biomorphic and organic stylisation, still more about an Art Informel material elaboration of dense layers of purple and ruddy pigments. The painting *Masts*, on the other hand, tells of the endeavour to have a more austere structural organisation of the composition, of geometrical, rectangular zones and parts, treated in transparent layers of lively contrasts and blends of a mainly open gamut. The well nigh Constructivist matrix is the result of the abolition of mimesis and referential factors. In the first version (1964-65) the outlines of ships and marine surfaces were recognisable, while the final, refined, painting had only a skeletal network of emphatic verticals.

The exhibition in the Pater Gallery in Milan in 1964 was the start of the long Italian phase or episode in the painter's work, certainly under the abbreviated name of Jos, chosen to facilitate pronunciation. The respected critic Garibaldo Marussi was there to greet her with a preface, recognising in her work "a sunny world, which, though, could hear the salt, the wind off the sea and the life that teemed among the reefs"; in the seen frames, then, she inscribed the atmosphere of the Mediterranean points of departure. Perhaps still more important is his statement that the oppositions of the planes are mutually conciliatory, the initial imbalance,



New York, 1951.
gvaš | gouache
55,5 x 44,5 cm



New York, 1952.
gvaš | gouache
58 x 46,2 cm

practically a smash and break-up, are finally harmonised in a luminous epiphany, leading from the dramatic to the lyrical. In the same year, Vera Jos went to Bergamo as well, and in the catalogue of the exhibition held in the Culture Centre another prominent critic was heard, Franco Passoni, emphasising the intellectual and rational component built on top of the sensory and expressive grounding of the formative years. Aware of Vera's complex working orbit, he passed over her homeland training as a necessary start in tradition, saw the Parisian stay as an enrichment with the experience of Impressionist and Fauvist light, interpreted the American challenge as the necessity to confront vital stimuli, while he saw the Italian incubation as response to the necessity for stronger control of the instinctive drive to paint and a channelling of creativity to more intimate and more strictly rational dimensions.

It is clear that foreign reviewing insisted on the cosmopolitan characteristics and saw the painting of Vera Jos in the light of a synthesis of morphologies and civilisations. We are bound here to draw on foreign testimonies, for we have a rather small number of samples from the traditional phases of the mid-sixties. In any event, these are variations on concise landscape art, confrontations of primary elements (water and earth, sea and sky) with associations of karstic regions or Adriatic archipelagos. Privileging an aerial perspective, a bird's eye view, it is occasionally as if the painter were approaching structures like stone piles or dry stone walls, while, on the other side, should could disrupt something of the heritage of *aeropittura*, the Futurist bold visions from on high. The later orientation towards the interweaving and crossing of strong gestural traces, towards the juxtaposition and breaking of the dashed applications of paint, absolutely derives from a conscious assimilation of some Cubo-Futurist premises, congenial to her own dynamic and laconic nature.

In a span of about 30 years of living full throttle in Italy and Switzerland, Vera Jos had a number of well-received exhibitions, and attained a critical bottom line worthy of respect. From the written reception, the dense critical *fortuna*, we may pick out a few more pertinent views and assessments. Giancarlo Pandini, for example, observes that the "naturalistic indications are almost melded into the dense space, and become increasingly unreal... and ever more poetic because of the radiation of the light that surrounds them." Sergio Sangiorgi recognised – in the title of his review – "a balance of form and motif", and in the text itself he particularly highlights her "palette of fundamental colours, strong tones, which are rhythmically sequenced in an asymmetrical succession". He adds: "Forms hardly touch the reality of the object and break out beyond the capacities of ordinary descriptions, subsequently opening up to a bold and, surely, new dynamic".

The critic Elda Fezzi several times affirmed the painter's work. On the first occasion she referred to the works of Vera Jos being "the product of an energetic constructive sense, backed up with good technical grounding and culture particularly related to the experience of the French school." A second time, the critic recognised and praised the increased maturity: "The use of formal and chromatic elements has achieved facility, and the tissue of the canvas is a patent harmony between idea and executions. The breaches and cuttings that spread and interweave around the worked field are no longer impulsive and gestural vibrations, for their frequency is monitored and the subtleties of their harmonies harkened to, created with the tiniest variations, almost veils of repressed contrasts".

In the development and expansion of her thematic circles, Vera Josipović also tried her hand at big series of paintings dealing with motifs of branches and knots, or of flowers, stalks and petals. The second circle of motifs resulted in a delicacy and transparency of application, an entirely different range of colours and surface treatment than in the previous paintings. Almost like the sensual floral imagery of Georgia O'Keefe, the great calyxes of Vera Jos – in their softened transparencies of yellow, pink and violet – nod at banked up, restrained emotionality as internal reserve of creative potentials. We might say something similar (although just the opposite too) about her works on steel plates, in which delicacy of touch is yoked to determination of execution.

Vera Josipović had inclinations to try her hand, too, in applied assignments: as illustrator, designer of trademarks, decorator, mosaicist. But we cannot ascribe her approach to the working of steel to either functional use or commissions. What is more, her involvement with steel plates (not quite to say experimentation) came because she refused to paint on steel with oil paints, could not accept the role of decorating that material. She felt that the materiality of steel emanated its own truth, and unexpected effects could break out from the rustless gleam, that the plate could be treat-

ed in such a way that it would itself reveal the latent layers and different levels of luminous radiation.

Instead of painting on steel plates, the painter decided to tease out forms and reflections from these plates. Her compositions activated by abrasion, however, have elements and rhythmical approaches to a great extent analogous to the dynamics achieved on canvas. But they have an entirely different facture; from the different technique, the kinship with the acquisitions of machine civilisation, with the poetics of the rational and constructivist direction, break out. It is not surprising that Ivan Picelj should have connected these new experiences of the painter with the orientation of Exat or scientism generally. But it would be enough to compare the works in steel of Vera Jos with, for example, the aluminiums of Getulio Alviani to see how similarities in performance procedure do not necessarily mean unity of aesthetic premise, for the Croatian painter would not consent, even when working metal, to mechanical austerity and mere geometry, but actually insisted on illusionist breaches into the texture, on suggestions of differentiated layers and planes, on the dynamic contrast of smooth and shaded portions, that is, on eminently painterly effects.

The exhibition that brings Vera Josipović back to her homeland is just a torso, an abstract, an epitome of her career, joining the extremes of her initial fresh figural *vedute* and the ripe autonomous compositional solutions, rounding off an intricate amplitude of achievements created after the academy time into confident departures into the different, the new, the untried.



New York, 1952.
gvaš | gouache
55 x 43,5 cm



Obluci | *Cobbles*, 1963
ulje na platnu | oil on canvas
99 x 72 cm



Jarboli | *Masts*, oko | about 1964/5
ulje na platnu | oil on canvas
130 x 90 cm



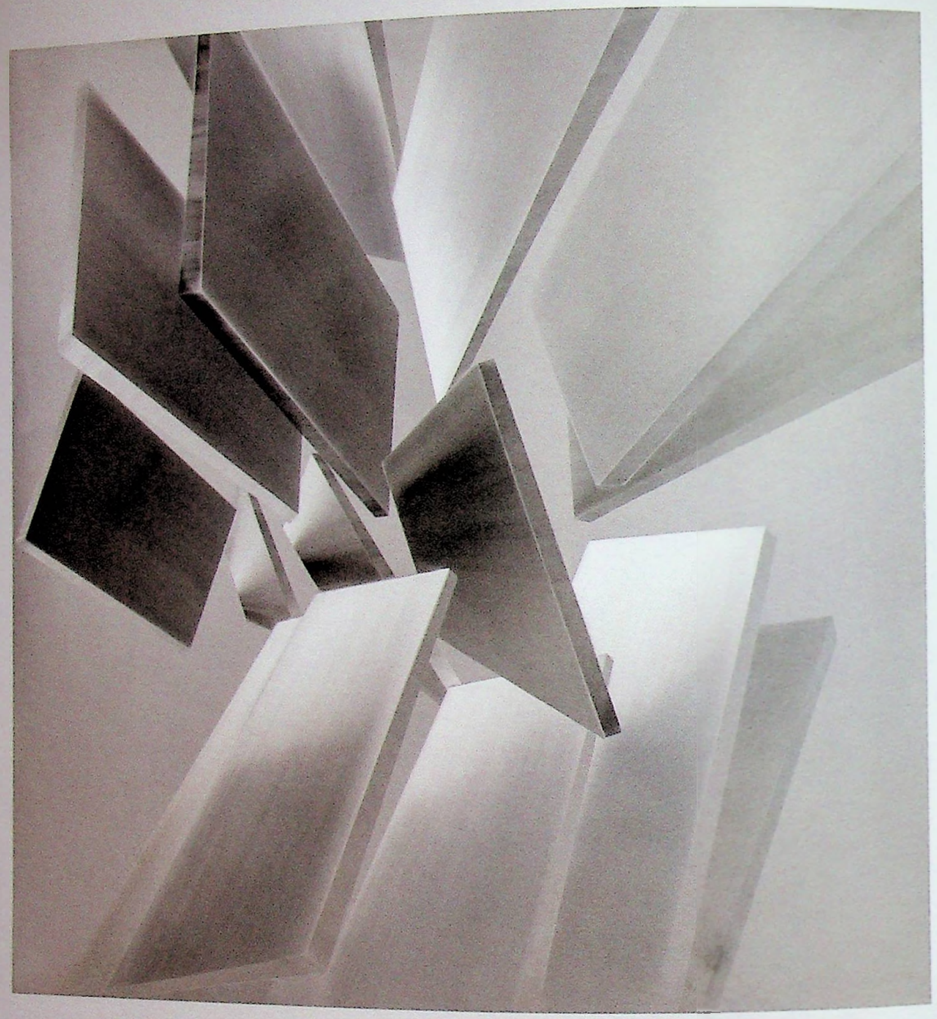
Forme u pokretu 1 | *Forms in Motion 1*, 1972
ulje na platnu | oil on canvas
130 x 130 cm



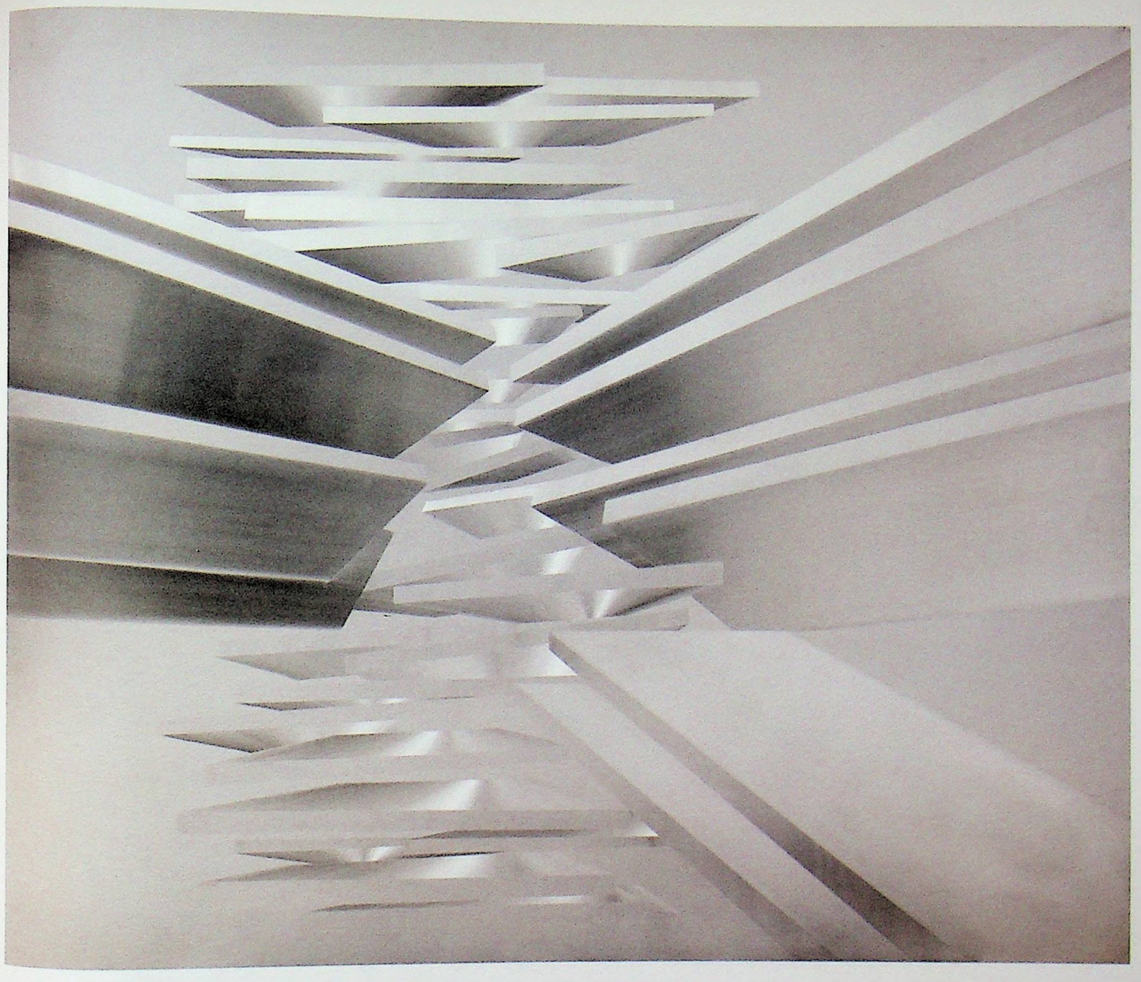
Forme u pokretu 2 | *Forms in Motion 2*, 1972
ulje na platnu | oil on canvas
130 x 130 cm



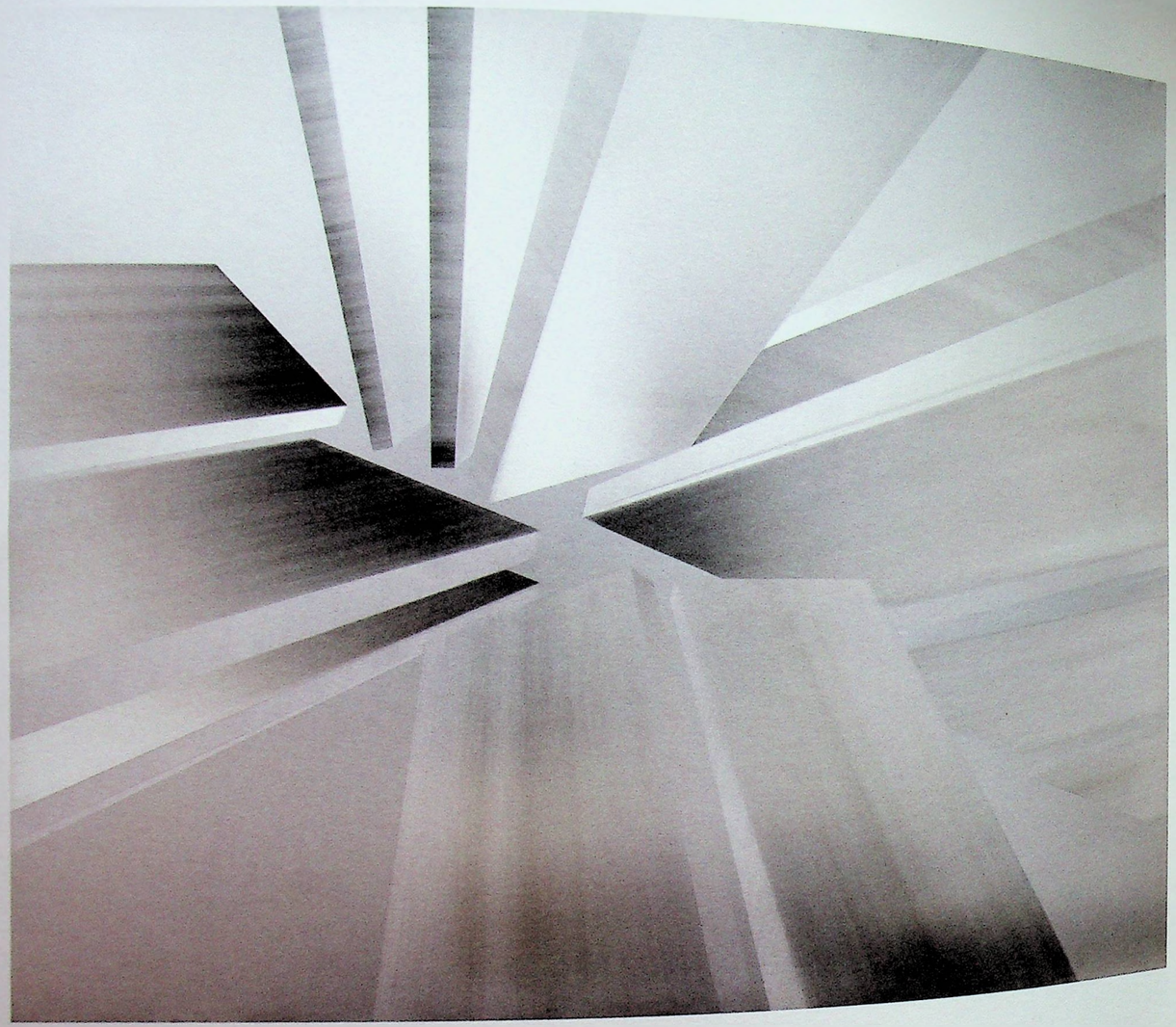
Forme u pokretu* | *Forms in Motion, 1976/77
brušena čelična ploča | abraded steel plate
100 x 100 cm



Forme u pokretu | *Forms in Motion*, 1976
brušena čelična ploča | abraded steel plate
70 x 70 cm



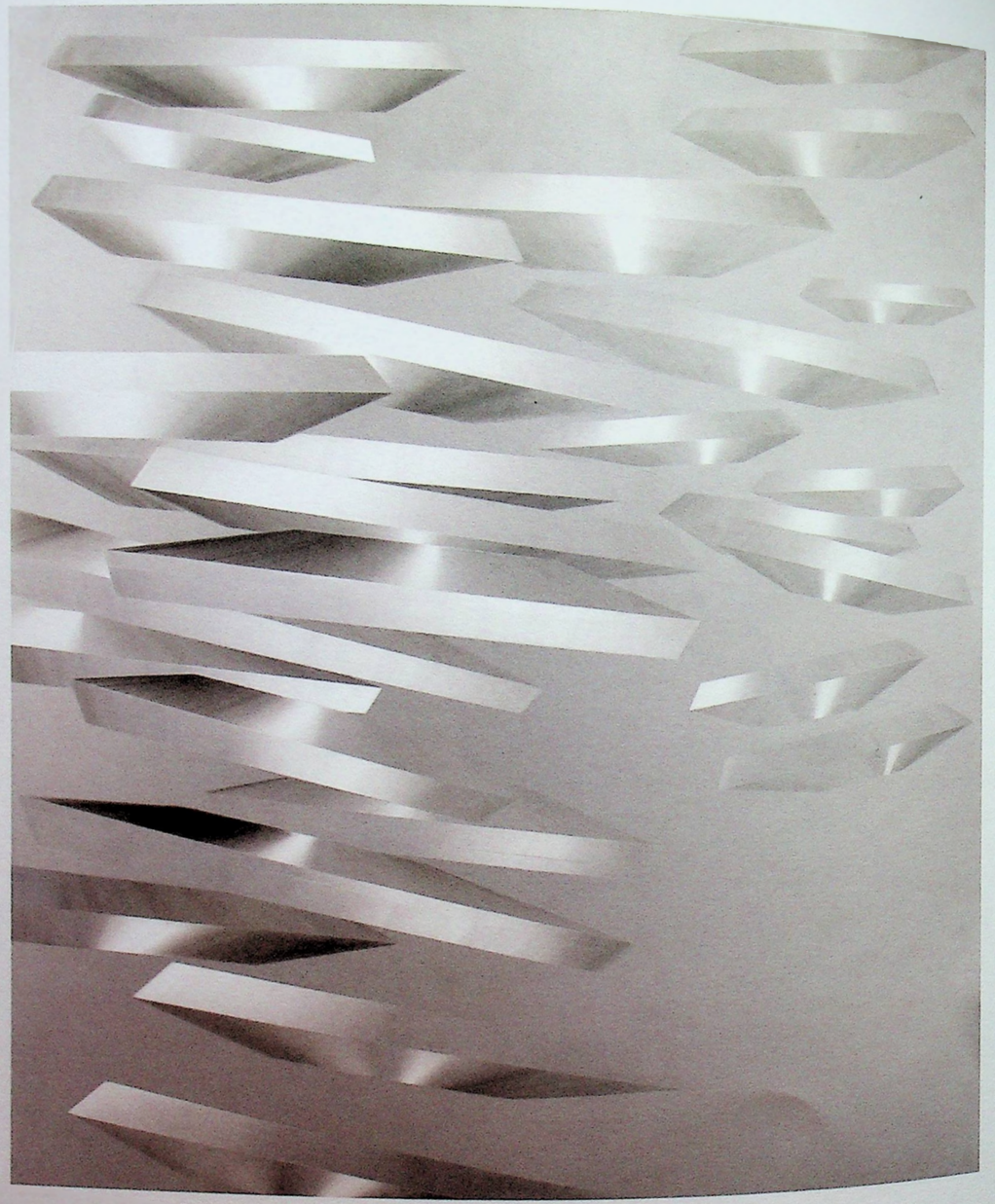
Forme u pokretu | *Forms in Motion*, 1976
brušena čelična ploča | abraded steel plate
120 x 100 cm



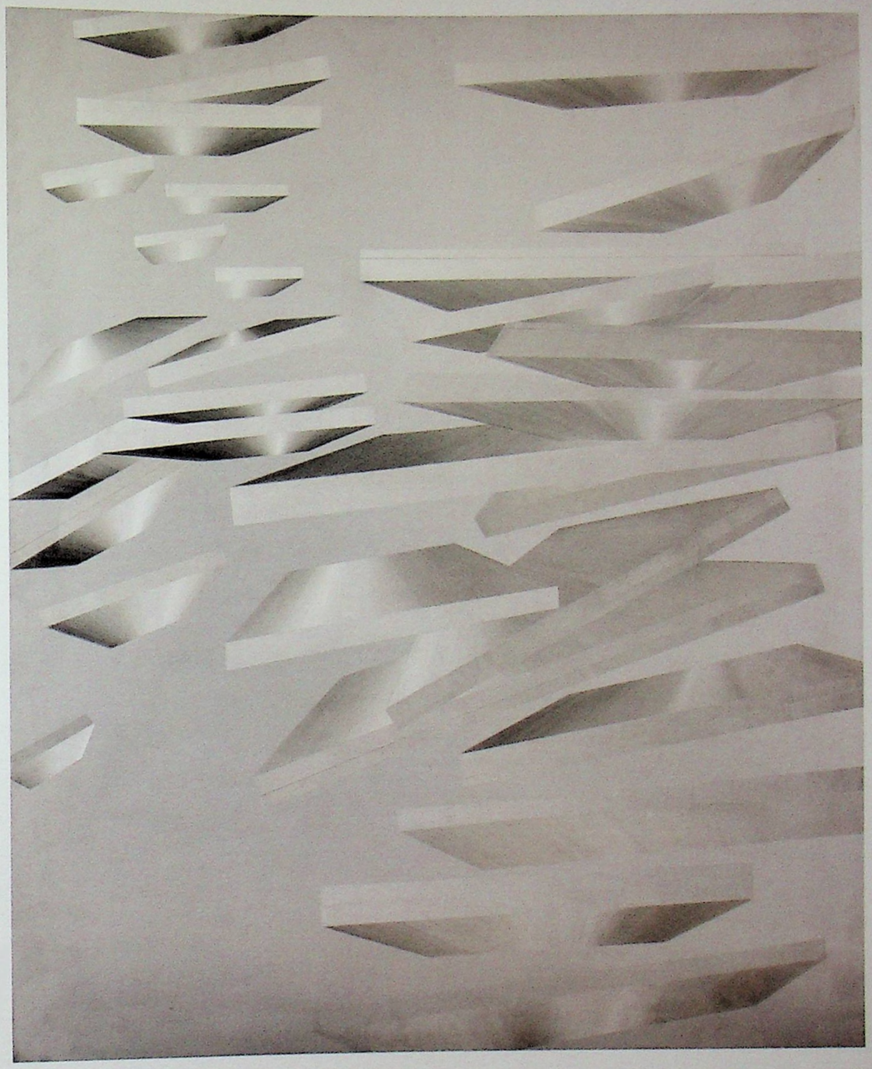
Forme u pokretu* | *Forms in Motion, 1976
brušena čelična ploča | abraded steel plate
120 x 100 cm



Forme u pokretu* | *Forms in Motion, 1976
brušena čelična ploca | abraded steel plate
120 x 120 cm



Forme u pokretu |
Forms in Motion, 1977
brušena čelična ploča |
abraded steel plate
120 x 100 cm



Forme u pokretu |
Forms in Motion, 1977
brušena čelična ploča |
abraded steel plate
120 x 100 cm

















Vera Josipović, 1973.

biografija

Vera Josipović je rođena 7. II. 1923. u Ivanjskoj.
Akademiju likovnih umjetnosti upisala je 1945., a diplomirala 1950. godine u klasi profesora Ive Režeka.
Od 1950. godine sudjelovala je na mnogim kolektivnim izložbama ULUH-a i LIKUM-a, a od 1964. izlaže pretežno u talijanskim gradovima.
Godine 1970. izvela je mozaik za hotel u Makarskoj.
Studijska putovanja vodila su je u Francusku, Italiju i Sjedinjene Američke Države, a znatno razdoblje života i rada provodi u Italiji i Švicarskoj.
U Hrvatsku, u Zagreb, Vera Josipović se definitivno vraća 2004. godine.
Njezini se radovi nalaze u galerijama Zagreba, Rijeke, Dubrovnika, Varaždina i Skopja, te u brojnim privatnim kolekcijama u zemlji i inozemstvu.
Na I. rimskom Biennalu 1969. godine nagrađena zlatnom medaljom u sekciji „Buduća imena", a na 6. nacionalnoj izložbi suvremenog slikarstva u Imoli, također 1969., Nagradom za slikarstvo.

biography

Vera Josipović was born on February 7, 1923, in Ivanjska.
She enrolled in the Academy of Fine Arts in Zagreb in 1945, and graduated in 1950, class of Ivo Režek.
From 1950 on she participated in many collective exhibitions put on by ULUH and LIKUM, while since 1964 she has primarily exhibited in cities in Italy.
Journeys of study took her to France, Italy and the USA, and she spent considerable periods of life and work in Italy and Switzerland.
Vera Josipović came back for good to Croatia and Zagreb in 2004.
In 1970 she did a mosaic for a hotel in Makarska.
Her works are to be found in galleries in Zagreb, Rijeka, Dubrovnik, Varaždin and Skopje, as well as in numerous private collections at home and abroad.
At the 1st Rome Biennial in 1969 she won a gold medal in the section "Names of the future" and at the 6th National Contemporary Painting Exhibition in Imola, also in 1969, a Painting Prize.

samostalne izložbe | individual exhibitions

Zagreb, Galerija LIKUM, 3-15. I. 1953.
Rijeka, Galerija Corso, II-III. 1953.
Osijek (s E. Murtićem / with E. Murtić), VI. 1954.
Borovo, Dom kulture, 1956.
Milano, Galleria Bergamini, VI. 1958.
Titograd, Umjetnička galerija
(sa S. Luketićem / with S. Luketić), VII. 1960.
Milano, Galleria Pater, 1964.
Bergamo, Circolo di cultura, 1964.
Cremona, Galleria Portici, I-II. 1966.
Cremona, Galleria Cornice, I. 1967.
Ravenna, Sala mostre, 1968.
Imola, Galleria Risorgimento, XI. 1969.
Pistoia, Galleria d'arte FG, 1970.
Milano, Galleria Il Girono, 1971.
Omegna, Galleria Spriano, 1973.
Bergamo, Galleria Fumagalli, XI. 1977.
Cremona, Galleria d'arte Renzo Botti, 1979.
Ascona, Selvaggio arredamenti, 1985.

izloženi radovi

Zagreb, 1950., 54 x 43,3 cm
Pariz, 1951., gvaš, 58 x 46 cm
New York, 1951., gvaš, 53,5 x 43,2 cm
New York, gvaš, 1951., 57,5 x 46,2 cm
New York, gvaš, 1951., 55,5 x 44,5 cm
New York, gvaš, 1952., 58 x 46,2 cm
New York, gvaš, 1952., 55 x 43,5 cm
Obluci, 1963., ulje na platnu, 99 x 72 cm
Jarboli, ulje na platnu, oko 1964/5., 130 x 90 cm
Forme u pokretu 1, 1972., ulje na platnu, 130 x 130 cm
Forme u pokretu 2, 1972., ulje na platnu, 130 x 130 cm
Forme u pokretu, 1976./77., brušena čelična ploča, 100 x 100 cm
Forme u pokretu, 1976., brušena čelična ploča, 70 x 70 cm
Forme u pokretu, 1976., brušena čelična ploča, 120 x 100 cm
Forme u pokretu, 1976., brušena čelična ploča, 120 x 100 cm
Forme u pokretu, 1976., brušena čelična ploča, 120 x 120 cm
Forme u pokretu, 1977., brušena čelična ploča, 120 x 100 cm
Forme u pokretu, 1977., brušena čelična ploča, 120 x 100 cm

exhibited works

Zagreb, 1950, gouache, 54 x 43,3 cm
Paris, 1951, gouache, 58 x 46 cm
New York, 1951, gouache, 53,5 x 43,2 cm
New York, 1951, gouache, 1951, 57,5 x 46,2 cm
New York, 1951, gouache, 1951, 55,5 x 44,5 cm
New York, 1952, gouache, 58 x 46,2 cm
New York, 1952, gouache, 55 x 43,5 cm
Cobbles, 1963, oil on canvas, 99 x 72 cm
Masts, about 1964/5, oil on canvas, 130 x 90 cm
Forms in Motion 1, 1972, oil on canvas, 130 x 130 cm
Forms in Motion 2, 1972, oil on canvas, 130 x 130 cm
Forms in Motion, 1976/77, abraded steel plate, 100 x 100 cm
Forms in Motion, 1976, abraded steel plate, 70 x 70 cm
Forms in Motion, 1976, abraded steel plate, 120 x 100 cm
Forms in Motion, 1976, abraded steel plate, 120 x 100 cm
Forms in Motion, 1976, abraded steel plate, 120 x 120 cm
Forms in Motion, 1977, abraded steel plate, 120 x 100 cm
Forms in Motion, 1977, abraded steel plate, 120 x 100 cm



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naslovnica | cover
Forme u pokretu* | *Forms in Motion, 1976
brusena čelična ploča | abraded steel plate
70 x 70 cm (detalj | detail)



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