

„Images of love cannot be put down on canvas - they can only be imagined.“ (Beltracchi)

proon by Rit Lomo

Digital palimpsest and the sensual deconstruction of intimacy as love

A **palimpsest** is an ancient or medieval manuscript page from which the text had been scraped off and which was then used again – a virtue made of necessity, with parchment such a rare commodity. It is possible that diverse thematic elaborations by different authors and from successive epochs were thus overlaid and much later became decipherable again in their layered construction. Historians, literati and philosophers are rejoicing. Temporal construction and deconstruction go hand in hand and provide a new sense of things – a new sensuality. This is quickly followed by a number of questions: What is the connection between the various layers? Is there a connection at all? What is their common origin? What can we see; and of what we see, what do we recognise? In terms of etymology: what is the inherent truth? proon is a neologism created by rearranging individual letters; and Rit Lomo is another example of it: deconstruction and reconstruction of a word, of the original. What is its inner meaning? “Pornography” comes from the Greek and means nothing other than “a written history of a hetaerae or prostitute”. What we mean by “porno” is something we all know. According to the artist, Rit Lomo, proon are based on a picture or photo of pornographic – or rather: erotic – content. Only model and photographer can describe the sensuous, aesthetic and erotic power of the original.

Or maybe the whole thing is a digital joke and a devious game played with our erotic imagination or expectations? Are we in need of such an archetype? I believe we are. Not because I can fathom or even see the concrete situation in proon, but quite simply because I know Rit Lomo.

When he says that “the profound truth of intimacy is love” it is concept and methodology in one – but also the history and the systemic behind his pictures. As a result of alienation and commercialisation, sexuality has become a reflex of the individual trying to escape from loneliness and death, and has lost its representational strength as part of a sensuality that feeds on the spiritual and emotional dimensions of the individual. That is the theory. In methodological terms, it means that Rit Lomo frees the photographic image of its representational and the reality of its apparently corresponding concreteness. This is followed by a digital palimpsest – the use of virtual tools to scrape off the historic layers. What remains, in abstract form, is the physically individualistic – the result of deconstruction. The next step is the reconstruction of shapes and colours – a kind of retouching: would-be landscapes, patterns, colour gradients – aesthetically loaded with the given erotically-pornographic components of the guessed-at original.

We see the picture as an entity. In terms of creation and how it is received, it appears to be a redefinition rather than a fabrication. Our perceptions and expectations are imaginary fragments that use the order of a digital palimpsest to combine with the abstract of beauty. Reading its various layers, we can happily recover the truth of the image. It is great fun – this lust for pictorial images. The phantasies of model, photographer and viewer are layered to form a sensually aesthetic impression. Creation and perception appear different in identity and the fulfilment of its contradiction. For me, the intrinsic truth arises from the act of preservation. This act is so progressive because it is so conservative. Not to accept the realism of its happening as given. Removing what is adjudged true and considered to be of value: the intimacy that finds fulfilment in love. This is how I also imagine the creative process, the actuality of photographic visualisation. A true act of intimacy – stripped of all its formality, full of trust, friendship and closeness. An emotional palimpsest as a way to preserve that which must be retained. In that sense, the proon by Rit Lomo are the sensual deconstruction of intimacy as love.

The photographer Rit Lomo is a Berliner and a citizen of the world, tirelessly scouring the globe at least since Reunification – as wayfarer, photographer and film maker, as project sponsor, inventor, explorer, entrepreneur ... It is proon that makes us discover the enabler, the artist in Rit Lomo.

And that – as I see it – with these words in mind: “...we can do simply anything, because it can be done – it does not have to be good or even meaningful.”

(Márai)

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