

The Art of Collage – Jelena Rokanovic

THE RULE OF FEMININE PRINCIPLE

In the conglomerate of today's accelerated, globalized society which is full of mirages, deceptions and foggy spectacles, collage as the form of art, is perhaps the best way to present some aspects and problems of a possible new world. Just like a collage, this world is also a huge mixture of influences, thoughts, emotions, imagination....

Focused on the realm of fashion and design, in a word, the nicer part of the reality, **Jelena Rokanovic** is using collage as her way of expression because it enables one to say a lot.

Visually attractive, these collages are telling their stories and in that way are illustrating, both thematically and symbolically or even just as intriguing ornaments in our environment (depending on how we experience them), the fragments of the reality that surrounds us.

Even though Jelena is assuring us that the dreams she is having, always in colour, picturesque and vivid, are not her inspiration, those dreams have, perhaps unconsciously, found their way to the images in her collages. The particles of reality – the photographs from magazines, often very commercial ones focused on eroticism and advertisements, markets and profits, in a word, very **pragmatic** goals, when put together in these collages sometimes appear as an abstract, tiny piece of a dream, a segment of imagination, of hope, of the past.....

And the time will show if they may be touching the future a little as well.

Some of the collages are like playing cards, can be looked at from either side, above and below. On a symbolic level, when you think about it, isn't life itself just that: a big card game, a lot of fun, ever changing luck and also something else that can be seen from different angles, something that confuses us again and again with its different faces which are, at the same time, unified and diverse, attractive and unusual and which give us different options of interpreting them but never quite revealing the truth about themselves?

Fashion, as one of the recognizable means of expression in these collages (clippings from fashion magazines, beautiful female faces and naked bodies, details dealing with the aesthetics of a woman as well as the space she occupies) is a mighty means of deception and a huge sale of dreams about the perfection one constantly aspires to but is never able to quite achieve. Achieving this perfection would be a utopia, i.e., a sort of the end of an adventure. This, however, does not prevent the initiators of the trend to incessantly try to convince us of its necessity which is pushing us down the whirlpool of superficial, external changes that are basically irrelevant but sufficiently intoxicating to blur our vision and lure us into consumerism which means the achievement of their ultimate goal.

In this consumption oriented world in which everything is for sale, the relationship between **man and woman** is beginning to change, taking on the form of a simple barter which brings about, to a certain extent, the loss of emotions. The collages of Jelena Rokanovic contain those ambiguous symbols provoked by the eternal discord in the male – female relationship (which is also their greatest wealth) thus creating a feeling that there is always a link missing which is preventing this indispensable harmony from being attained. Is it also some form of utopia? Will we ever have the opportunity to really experience it? These rich collages seem

to suggest a part of the truth that this male – female harmony is perhaps nothing but a great dream which only sometimes appears as a highly attractive opportunity showing us, just for a brief moment, how perfect and balanced life would have been in this harmony before it disappears again. It is also true that, in real life, this harmony appears only occasionally, as if to challenge us, as an idea which is not meant to ever fulfil us completely.

In the atmosphere of these collages one can feel a pleasant hint of an inevitable moment in human existence which, in spite of its wealth, leaves many questions unanswered. Is it a human destiny to never unveil all the secrets? Is it a curse or a blessing? Perhaps the one who longs to grasp those secrets should limit his attempts. What if all those big secrets are nothing but a soap bubble which disappears the moment we touch it? Perhaps instead we should grasp the beauty of mystery, embrace it and sincerely enjoy it

These images are presenting exactly this opportunity to the viewer, to enjoy them, to interpret them in many different ways and to enrich them with the breath of his own life.

Igor Vidovic