

JECZA GALLERY

BOGDAN RAȚĂ,

Walls have still got ears, 2009

The Clinic of Esthetic Installations

by Cornelia Maria SAVU

In his second postgraduate year at Bucharest, having graduated the University of Arts in Timisoara (Sculpting section) in 2006, Bogdan Rață is one of the most promising young artists in Romania. At 23 (born in Baia Mare, 1984) he is currently doing a masters degree under the guidance of Adrian Popovici and already possesses a prestigious record: the Eurobarometruvizual Prize, offered by the Center for Contemporary Art in Bucharest (2007), second prize at "Lumina în clarobscur", offered by the Dutch Embassy (2006), the Excellence Prize offered by the University of Arts of Timisoara (2005). His first solo show, „Amprente si insecte“ (Prints and Insects), opened in 2005 at the Mansarda Gallery, in Timisoara, is proof of a spectacular originality, backed up by talent and method and, equally, testament to the artist's ascent towards fertile experiments, at present, but without ostentation.

Bogdan Rață, having won the aforementioned prizes and also participated at important symposiums, such as the International Sculpture Symposium at Caransebes, at festivals, biennales and group exhibitions, has cleared the way towards his affirmation, in which his teachers and colleagues earnestly believe. It's worth reminding that, through all this, the young artist has also participated with a monumental sculpture project at the Triade Park, Interart Triade Foundation, Timisoara (managed by renowned sculptor Peter Jecza), also taking part at the "Eastern Neighbours", Romania, Babel Cultural Centre, Utrecht, Holland, Anuala Artelor, Colonia Pictorilor, Baia Mare, The Sculpting Biennale in Târgoviste, group exhibition at Szeged (Hungary), the presence at the Studenfest Timisoara, etc.

At the end of January 2008, Bogdan Rață will accompany sculptor Sava Stoianov to Paris, at an ultra selective, private mini-symposium, where, for a month, the two Romanian artists will create two monumental works. That of master Sava Stoianov, seven meters tall (oak and copper), will be an „Open page of a book“. The work of Bogdan Rață, a symbolic „furniture piece“, will be a „Chair for stable“, a possible epilogue to his license theme, the object as corporeal metaphor. Both works have already been bought by a private collector and will stay in Paris.

In the months preceding the departure to the capital of France, the young artists continues to be preoccupied by his future solo show, which he wishes to open at Bucharest, "in a cramped space, a kind of apartment, in which the objects and drawings are styled like ad posters, to take possession of the onlooker".

In a new stage of his creation, Bogdan Rață is inspired by a spectacular Hellenism with contemporary connotations; by the change in context of the anatomic detail and even the change of face of the modern man, always looking for a new personality of his self-image and the image portrayed to

others. Trenchantly, with a playful tendency, even dark humor, which however does not exclude gravity, the sculptor and creator of installations, is preoccupied with the artist's condition in the face and in the heart of the supermarket culture; in which the alluring offer in diversity, the bulimic consumerism, the shopping obsession changes human nature to such a degree that it adapts on anatomical fragments, to the desired objects and even changes identity with these. Bogdan Rată is a kind of "manager" of a clinic of aesthetic installations. Or a lively Dr. Frankenstein who experiments with method, on bits, in an aseptic medium, the precariousness of personalities in today's world and sets the spotlight on the image which replaces the identity in a microclimate of fashion and brands, which enhances the unreal of daily life, the serialization, the robotization.

Rubber, plastic, silicon, metal and lace are the "prime resources" of this veritable "Live beauty salon" (as named by the young artist) in which Bogdan Rată gives birth to the synthetic man. The embryo-clone enclosed in strange receptacles, whose transparency, paradoxically, covers up the contents rather than reveals them, massive metallic corsets with (suggested) chastity belts embroidered with diaphane-frivolous ribbons which take up the form (and functions) of the organs which they should be looking after rigorously, palm-feet and punk Mohawks in which the hair is replaced by fingers, mixtures of anatomical elements of silicon, mortuary head-masks with flabby ears which don't even hear the noise of the exterior babel, nor the interior voice, are elements which decompose and recompose the synthetic man in the labyrinth of the supermarket culture. In correspondence, humble objects, furniture pieces, customary objects or objects with invented purpose: the chair for polishing shoes, the chair for cows, for cars or the chair for the stable gain a personality, an identity (humanized), they are delivered to a new functionality. And to a new symbolic code.

The exceptional native talent, with its special reflexivity, well schooled, on the lookout for everything that moves in the zone (at the Brits and at the Americans especially), Bogdan Rată is riding the waves. In his case, the expression does and does not take up a metaphorical connotation, if we take into consideration the passion the young artist has for fishing, which offers him a chance to relax, but also for putting in motion new projects.