

Alexander Martirosov is engaged in advertising, and quite successfully: most recently, in January, his photo-shoot made for Mania Grandiosa, was nominated in Los Angeles for the prestigious 6th PHOTOGRAPHY MASTERS CUP. This is not the only difference: Martirosov is very much in evidence on the professional photo and advertising scene for several years.

Usually if the master of advertising agrees to work with landscape, they cannot give up certain craft professional installation. It's not even the matter that as a rule these landscapes are oriented at the genre of tourist booklet with all the requirements it imposes.

No, the installation is demonstrated through the visual aspect. The advertising photography primarily represents ecstatic things. "The Ecstasy of Things», - the name of one of the best albums, showing the evolution of object in advertising, is not a coincidence - from function to fetish (Sost.T.Seeling and U. Stanel; Steidl, 2005). This refers to the thing's own ecstasy of show, exhibition, importance and ecstasy of possession, let it be symbolic, which flows into the potential consumer-buyer. Considering the landscape series of Martirosov I have not noticed any traces of such craft installation. Well, there is no trace of advertising "work-away" - to broadcast outside paradigmatic beauty with that optical package, which stimulates the tourist demand. I have even watched intentionally the advertisement of the same Mania Grandiosa. Women's shoes are of quite tortuous style. Martirosov transforms them to the scale of a certain architectural object - something of a modern urban environment, through transparent, widely opened for (to) the passer-by: hall, show room, small stage. This object is populated by Martirosov with the models in swimsuits- there they are doing something with their accessories: screw up, highlight. Or just relax. The artist somehow, preserving the functionality of the task (fashion is fashion, try one iota oppress these fashionable), tells his own not so funny fairy-tale - the version of "Cinderella": girls are not trying on shoes hoping to change fate; they are forever "prescribed" in heels and generally attributed to the shoes. Well, now it is clear why the scenes of Martirosov are not connected with the advertising supply: if he is striving for making advertisement more intimate, he is obliged to solve his own extraordinary tasks in the genre of scenes...

In the panoramic scenes of Tuscany («Sunlight Spaces») subvertising and non-booklet principle is immediately underlined. The latest, as it has been already mentioned, involves the outside installation: scene is objectified, and is transmitted as an object of desire in the corresponding optical package. On the contrary in panoramas of Martirosov: Optics draws inwards, deep down. Least of all it is the "consumption of the scene," as the youth says on its slang, "checking it out".

The sunbeaten, desolate fields of Tuscany grade the most spreading, more often unreflected, the idea of "optical possession" in the version of the artist.

The artist does not grade it by complexity: a proposal to seek a certain access code. No, on the contrary, it is extremely simple: there is no ulterior motive, no cipher - a space is in front of you, just come in. There is only one condition: the artist shows some humility and offers to share it. Humility is a willingness to getting used to the scene, leisurely revaluation of subject realities - poles, trees, stacks stowed in cubes "not in our way", etc. I do not know, but from my point of view Martirosov consciously or not continues at the present stage of the installation Subjective Photography - European movement that existed in the 1950s and has become in many ways a reaction to the idea of Big control, subordinating the photographic art of totalitarian countries. Why is updated the experience of Subjective? I think that contemporary photography also needs to move away from the idea of Control. Now this idea is not associated with an ideology, but with something else. On the one hand it is a dictate of the concept, a certain revealed installation of consciousness, which guides photo media. On the other hand it is a fetish of objectivity going from the advertising as a resource for subconscious. So that is why a simple getting used to the scene (in fact – it is not as simple as we have lost the skills of space experience, but about it later) represents the need of certain lines of contemporary art to "wash vision" (a phrase of K. Petrov-Vodkin), to find a loophole in the continuous fence of conceptualized art discourse. The strategy of Martirosov is very simple in this series - it is completely expressible by the old definition: to take a look. We may say "yes" to strategy, but the realization possesses the potential of self-development. Wide aspect lens provides a horizontal spatial coverage, but the author also endeavors to highlight the solemn order of spatial plans by non-technical means. These are ways of natural, full-scale composite: a horizontal line correlated with the viewer's position, a certain line traced foreground (an irrigation pipe laid on the ground), structuredness of the soil itself, bearing traces of the age-old process, cultivation. This natural structuredness and compositionality are important, among other things, as a factor of the release from the Control: they are not outside, intended, fabricated - they are observed, they are full-scale. There is another factor of this kind: the artist eliminates any hint of a direct linear perspective of pictorial sense. Just in the middle of several pictures a country road is given: it is going naturally "into the distance", turning in a subtle thread. But at the same time the reducing of the spatial plan is not organized, on the contrary, they seem to "swell", optically correcting these seemingly dimensional linear changes. Optics also lets avoiding effect of "edges' wrapping" on the periphery of the space: it makes remembering the installation of Matyushin on "extended watching." Yes, repetitive, deprived of a hint of event-related effects panoramas of Tuscan fields are nothing but a manifestation of this "washed", not intentional (i.e., subordinate concepts), extended watching. Of course, there is something else behind it. In these series Martirosov perhaps comes near to the ideas of land art: plowed, cultivated, marked ground is given almost

sculpturally, with some special sense of tactility. Series «Expanded world» are more populated: some motives are almost the nature of the genre. Yes and viewing moment is also important here: after all there are not endless fields here, and the medieval tourist towns of Europe. Full-scale realities are important already in «Sunlight Spaces»: all these heaps, trees, telegraph-poles were not equal to their function, and they were a kind of optical guideline on getting used to the space. In “Expanded world” these guidelines are not only spatial, but also historical, architectural, of common life. The name of the series for a reason sounds like expanding worlds: one space follows from the other; superimposed on the third ... In my opinion the most important work is a deserted beach with deck chairs, tables, etc. Of course, there is a certain hidden rolled-narrative: at least the possibility of the story "from the life of resting people" ... But there is something more important behind this recalculation of the poles, empty beach cabins, a wooden beach deck, dividing the beach space one the halves ... Some time ago an author of one of the best books on poetics of photos (Ian Jeffrey. *How to Read a Photography*. Abrams, NY., 2008), considering the panoramic shots of Prague 1950 by Josef Sudek with their abundance of signs, road markings, subject spatial cues, wondered why is it taken? And he answered to himself: we are dealing with a comprehend space in which the routine is adjacent to the possibility of an unexpected choice. That is, in this context, freedom of navigation. Returning to Martirosov let us note that the subject-dimensional grid, which is "looked for" by artist in a full-scale situation, directs the viewer's gaze movement. But it constantly apposes him a choice: due to the endless optical intersections and roll calls, he can choose his own way back to go beyond the "pictures" mentally. And – to come back to as it was... The potential of narrative (even if already mentioned the possibility of some "beach" story line) is superimposed on the grid, and as a result a certain very authorial condition is born, which I would call an optically melancholy condition ... Of course, Martirosov does not limit himself to any scene or emotional plan; for example, in “Indian series” («Nuances of Time») there are moments of pure genres. Series makes its theme the seemingly banal problem of "old and new". But it makes its theme not "subject-ethnographic" (or not the only way), but optically-space. It's about time flow regimes: extremely modern, nervous, dynamic - and somnabular self-absorption. But super urban and archaic modes are defined by primarily compositional and optical means of all the same sensible navigation in space. In "Sontinuum" the landscapes are the most cleared from the genre and tactile and textural bindings: a strict drawing coast, rocks, and some divergent series of strokes' formations (Reed? Buoys on floats of a farm on cultivation of oysters? It does not matter – it is not about the function. The main aspect here is that these formations are likened to the hieroglyphs of their bodiless and intangible). Here the navigation within space has already optically-metaphysical cast.

Martirosov has come to the St. Petersburg series with a large landscapes experience. And - with some, I believe, - timidity: in fact, who has not just photographed St. Petersburg! If in the previous series the artist was looking for structural patterns and spatial navigation marks in the full-scale situations, St. Peter is an embodied structuring, continuous sign!

Without mentioning that the panoramic form itself involves a lot of cultural and historical connotations of the general type – line of heaven, a reference to the St. Petersburg views of M. Makhaev and V. Sadovnikov etc. Here a mass production of tourism should be added, which does not allot creative tasks, but covered the paradigmatic beauty with a “lacquer of thousand views” as L. Tolstoy said. The photographer had to find his own imaginative excuse of panoramic form. It seems to me, he finds it. First of all, it means (as opposed to purely advertising facilitating "passage" of the image - the product to the consumer's heart or stomach) to remove the automatism of ("lacquer", gloss) perceptions. To do this, he uses a kind of braking contact with classically architectural, specific. Two-thirds of the space (front and middle plans) landscape, representing the classic look of the Smolny Cathedral, fills in the broken ice. The vision is dived into unstructured mass, it is drowning in it. Then the image of overcome appears: architectural classic is not so accessible, we need some work to do to get not possession, it is early to talk about it but just simple contact ...

View of the Palace Embankment and the Troitsky Bridge is the same paradigmatic and here the idea of - no, not availability, but the demands of architecture is realized. Yes, it seems to be the right word - demands: the habit of automatically perceiving of architectural text should be overcome. But here it is not about the text, the right of access. Two parallel column-pier are hammered in to the foreground as nails. Then we can see a zone of broken ice, then wide ice-hole. The viewer is required to overcome this obstacle. In fact - the band of inertia vision: the susceptibility of the eye, the activation of the vision is worked through non-classical, for which paradoxically is set optics of the photographer. Photographer preaches: it is early to move to architecture not learning to experience simple light texture and spatial aspects, such as the contrast of the artificial geometry and texture of the granite embankment and natural organic sludge. It shall not be given into the hands.

Thus, it is time for categories of accessibility and overcome. Martirosov often uses other techniques of reflected photo-vision. The following reception of visual approach to meaningful (aka optical) center of the classical picture of the sword, flagstaff, the spear is located diagonally from front to rear, as it accelerates eye on these substantive and stops at the images of the main characters.

As we can see, the photographer often uses braking method of perception, not this acceleration in the St. Petersburg series. But there are other examples. In the landscape of view to the Admiralty from Palace Embankment eye quickly runs up on the parapet diagonally, then "leaves" on the Troitsky Bridge. This run encloses a huge, almost interstitial (water and stone parapet, openwork bridge in the background) a piece of the city. This such a kind of minimalism is important to photographer as the moment of "sentimental education". Both his and the audience. Everyone will love the ceremonial city; it is more difficult to learn spatial and textured experiences in such ascetic material ...

Well, it seems that new photographer has been formed in St. Peterburg whose subject was the sensible navigation in space. This is good news.

*Alexander Borovskiy*