

Attila Pokorny – Natural Frequencies

Magma Gallery, Saint George, 2013

“Man must be everyday, or he will not be at all” – Henri Lefebvre

Attila Pokorny’s Natural Frequencies solo art show at MAGMA challenges the lineage of art rooted in concept, and even in nature as a concept. To show at a gallery named for magma, that pool of heated rock at the centre of this earth whose temperature, according to Wikipedia, is 9000 degrees Fahrenheit works well! Art is a necessary to humanity as the sun is to nature, for it guides us to identify “who we are, where we have come from, and where we are going”. The impulse to create reflects an implicit desire to improve the world around us. The limits imposed upon us by nature, of which we are a part, are sending us a message. The message is that reason alone cannot better our quality of life. The ebb and flow of energies that are part of the process of life in our biosphere are the procreative core of our need to transform, enrich, express. All cultures are rooted in nature. And nature is a volatile system, endlessly in transformation, but subject to the laws of physics. Pokorny’s art is a procreative response to all that turbulence, that procreative design, the endless transformation. He leaves an ephemeral imprint, like a footprint on the environment. Pokorny treads softly, and the traces are like the leaves falling from a tree of memory. The tree is the tree of life. Pokorny’s art is intuitive. He reworks available materials. Nature is the store. The home is nature. Interaction is inter-species, and it is intercultural. Pokorny’s interventions are a way of integrating with place. The symbiosis he arrives at, after feeling his way along and through each experience, becomes a work of art. But the art is not an object, more a trace of a memory that comes from the flow of time, and of generations in this land. Brancusi was a sculptor from around these places, and the accidents and resolutions we find in his art bring us back to the spiritual. They do so, as Pokorny does, through simple understanding of life, of actions that we all do, and an integrity born of understanding nature’s design. Nature speaks to Pokorny, and he replies. It all comes together.

Attila Pokorny’s art is a manifestation of the actions of everyday life. Nature provides everything. And everything becomes part of the art. A response to site, to the action of making, and an art that recalls the traditions of Pokorny’s ancestors. It all comes together in a sequence of actions, not so different from Richard Long’s A Line Made by Walking (1967). The difference is re-siting the art, so it becomes an unconscious expression of connectedness to the flow of energy that is our earth. The concept does not dominate, nor is the art an object. And so Natural Frequencies, the sense of tuning in, and that the earth itself is an architecture in formation, suits the Brick Carpet installation Pokorny has made. With moss, pieces of wood, such simple materials, and a carpet, something that covers something else, we sense the layering that is part of nature, and a part of human-built design. Other photo works document a range of Pokorny’s art. More

recent works such as Harp Gate, made for the Biennale of Art and Nature at Gong Ju in South Korea (2012) evidence the range and extent of Attila Pokorny' growth as an artist. The art is so close to music, to the rhythms of life, to nature's own music. Linking between, the space between becomes a key you can turn to understand what you do not see, but sense in these works. In Pagoozd, Hungary in 2010, Attila Pokorny broadened the scale of the drawing in nature, following a long natural crack in the stone geological rock façade. Nature's architecture, geological formation, and the breaks in these now ancient rock forms are the place for visual stitches, points of re-joining, of re-connecting.

At the Zsolnay factory in Pécs, Pokorny sought to "heal" an abandoned fore brick wall in this factory building with his Sewn Wall, carving into the brock in relief. The patternings look like weaving. Pokorny's carved forms in the brick look like part of an ongoing pattern hidden beneath the white plaster walls. As Pokorny says: "The walls, hills, streets and the sutures of trails expropriated by me are made almost in secret. I create these in a hurry in a few hours or a day or two. The weather and other factors do not allow the work to be lengthy."3 And yet the act of introducing a "natural weave" to an essentially geometric brick structure produces a counterpoint that is not just decorative, but juxtaposes geometries on two levels. The structure of the brick wall per se, and then the reworking of what was once a functional structure into a wall artwork.

Something human touches something eternal, nature's holistic processes that we are a part of, and have always been a part of. We see temporary works made by the shorelines of Sicily and Romania. The stitched patterns made of leaves and sand are sketches in the earth's sketchbook. Left to disintegrate as climate, the actions of waves, and of nature. They dissolve over time. Pokorny's Grout of Four Seasons series infills, with natural

materials like sticks and leaves along the cracks in stone walls at Cesky Krumlov in Slovakia, 2009). He does the same for a deteriorating brick wall with green leaves in Tolcsva, Hungary in 2010. The gestures Attila Pokorny enacts are healing actions, cathartic and in context with place.

As Friedrich Nietzsche wrote in Ecce Homo, “Sit as little as possible, credit no thought not born in the open air and while moving freely about – in which the muscles too do not hold a festival.” As humans we were made to move through space. And so Brancusi’s birds speak of this beautiful mercurial impossible beauty. Our actions and thoughts are clear when we move, and the process of Pokorny’s art is all about connecting. Time’s arrow flies and the generations of women who sewed in this region are being paid a tribute through Pokorny’s art, which can be similar to weaving the earth together, or even structures made by man. Ecology is not a luxury, nor is it an object. Ecology is a process. To understand this, as Attila Pokorny does, is a kind of wisdom. Wisdom becomes a point of departure for the creative impulse.

- *Henri Lefebvre, Critique of Everyday Life, Vol. 1, London & New York, Verso, 1991, p. 127*
- *Friedrich Nietzsche, Ecce Homo, Itrans. R. J. Hollingdale), Penguin; Harmondsworth 1979, p. 54*
- *Attila Pokorny in conversation with John K Grande, Eger, Hungary, 2011*

John K. Grande curator