

Lisa Torell: **Lume în traducere**

Trei cadre dublu expuse World in Translation Three double exposed frames

**Acoperiți de obiectiv / Covered by the Lens**

**Identitate, definiții și mantră / Identity, Definitions and Mantras**

**Fațade / Façades**

The world seems to become a place destined to people who travel: those who travel to somewhere, with the purpose of business or leisure, and those who travel from somewhere, chased by war, hunger or other misfortunes. In between, those who are just bored and travel for the sake of travel, without a precise destination, and those who are seeking something which is yet undefined, and which they themselves are hoping to discover at the end of the journey. Not only to discover, but to be among the few who see it first, unspoiled, amazing, yet still genuine, to be the first tourist in a tourist-free area. This is the promise of tourism today, to deliver the ultimate authentic experience.

As Umberto Eco observed already in 1975 in his *Travels in Hyperreality* book, what tourism and entertainment have to offer us is the perfect illusion at the perfect price. It's this illusion, and the Western quest for the place which is always "more perfect", more untouched that Lisa Torell brings into question in her works. She uses images which have an exotic allure, and writes on them, literally, her own texts, apparently tale-like and in a vocabulary with an advertising note, but in reality critical and self-critical. She is referring to the perpetually colonial - Western - traveler consumer, who is not satisfied with, or does not know how to only be in a place, and instead needs to label that place, find a right compartment for it on a scale of experiences, and not least, take it back home, for example in the form of a culinary souvenir.

The artist is including herself in the critique, questioning her perspective from which to represent a reality which she is for the first time encountering by keeping her distance and making visible her own conditions and conditionings. In talking about herself, in the first person, she is not throwing the responsibility to the readers; they can still see themselves as innocent, for look, the artist is only telling a story, she likes to write like other people like to take pictures on their vacation.

However, the I soon becomes the we, the us, just as easily as they becomes them. Sure, there is always the pretext that one cannot understand a language - isn't it part of a holiday pack that you can escape totally by not speaking or understanding the others? So that you don't even have to pretend that you're listening, you're absolved by your linguistic inexperience... That's where the artist is not content, where she does not trust our Global family of Englishspeaking tourists. Her texts, first written in Swedish, then translated into English, are every time the project is presented in a different country, translated into the language of that place, and presented parallel to the original or the English version. Sometimes different versions are presented together and the spectators are given the possibility to compare. Thus the works of Lisa Torell imply that authentic travel is first of all an experience of translation - linguistic and subsequently cultural translation.

(Raluca Voinea)